

THE IMPACT OF THE ENCOUNTER:
REVIVAL IN THE SANCTIFYING POWER OF GOD

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ABSTRACT

The issue this writer desires to address is the one concerning spiritual renewal of the church. This project's objective is to briefly identify revival as it relates to holiness and then give biblical and theological evidence that supports the characteristics of genuine restoration. In Exodus it will be established that encountering the divine presence resulted in positional holiness. In the book of Leviticus this writer will identify the holiness of God's people in terms of their ethics, morals, lifestyles, etc.

The writer will then move into the New Testament in the book of Galatians. In Galatians there will be exploration in our new found position or relationship with Christ. From Galatians the writer will look at the life of Wesley and his theology concerning experience of the work of the spirit in the heart.

INTRODUCTION

Before discussing the issue of how one encounters God in revival, the term “revival” must be defined. Today there are many misconceptions about what revival (how we encounter God) implies. In many congregations a series of special services is referred to as “revival meetings.” These meetings are marked by a certain style of speaker and musical presentations, yet it is difficult for many congregations to make significant commitments to God. Talented speakers and inspiring musicians are not the biblical ingredients for what God defines as revival. God has gifted many speakers and needs able musicians in His Kingdom, but there must be more to true revival than such talents. Otherwise we have experienced the abilities of people and not the presence of God, as we have often been led to believe. An encounter with the presence of God constitutes revival, not the works of men.

The church, or Body of Christ, is dealing with the issue of how to experience revival. Denominational leaders and local pastors are struggling with what it will take to bring spiritual commitment to their local places of worship. The popularity of televangelism is rising throughout the world, but the level of personal commitment seems to be diminishing.¹ This raises the question of whether we are reviving our generation or entertaining them, something the Apostle Paul wrote would be a characteristic of the last days.² Seminaries are sending out educated people well

¹ Jason Byassee, “Be Happy: the health and wealth gospel,” *The Christian Century*, July 2005, 20.

² 2 Timothy 4:3-4. Paul states that the end times would be characterized by people’s desire to be entertained rather than given sound teaching.

qualified for church service, but still there is a missing component to the birthing of revival.

The church is using all of its human abilities to create conditions for revival, yet revival has not come. The religious world is calling upon all of its human resources to induce the spirit of God upon His people, and all of our human attempts continue to fail. We have convinced ourselves that if we produce the right musical style and deliver vivacious, intellectual messages we will be able to impress God, and He will come down to us. We must stop misleading ourselves; we cannot fascinate God with all of our venues of elaborate ministerial capacities. All of our technology, studies, and research will not engage God, for there is nothing that we can learn that God does not know.

In our pursuit of revival we have left off the main item -- God. So how do we bring God into revival? The simple answer is *humility*.³ According to Garth Rosell, there are three key components to revival: repentance, united prayer, and a biblical theology.⁴ All true revivals have always begun with repentance, a change of mind and conduct. It is impossible to have revival without repentance, and it is impossible to have repentance without change. It seems that many of our modern day revivals have numerous religious ingredients but little change of conduct. Repentance is to be followed by united prayer in the Body of Christ, and it is vital that the prayer is united. The results that follow must always be judged by biblical standards, thus reflecting the mandate given in the scripture.

³ 2 Chronicles 7:14. God calls His people to humble themselves in repentance in order to experience His blessings.

⁴ Garth Rosell, "Revival and Reform: Can These Bones Live Again," Lecture Presented at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary in Charlotte, N.C. on January 13, 2004.

Dr. Rosell defines five phases of the life cycle: birth, growth, maturity, decline, and death. Somewhere between maturity and decline we must have an interrupted cycle of renewal, which is revival.⁵ According to Leonard Ravenhill, as well as Rosell, we are used as instruments to bring revival by our prayers. Ravenhill states that many use the passages of Joel 2 to encourage the promise of revival,⁶ but he notes the passage is preceded by the demand to “rend your hearts and not your garments.”⁷ This involves the human part of repentance to see if God will hear our prayers and respond to them as we humble ourselves to His demands. As we obey our part of God’s demands, He is responsible to respond to us and fulfill his promises.⁸

REVIVAL DEFINED

Revival has been defined in many ways. Stephen Olford writes that “revival is the sovereign act of God, in which He restores his own backsliding people to repentance, faith and obedience.”⁹ C.E. Autrey concurs: “Revival is a reanimating of those who already possess life.”¹⁰ In Charles Finney’s opinion, “Revival consists in the return of the Church from her backslidings and in the conversion of sinners...Christians are more to blame for no being revived than sinners are for not being converted.”¹¹ Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. description of revival as “the restoration of

⁵ Garth Rosell, “Revival and Reform: Can These Bones Live Again?” Lecture Presented at Godon Conwell Theological Seminary in Charlotte, N.C. on January 13, 2004.

⁶ Joel 2:28. Includes the phrase of God’s promise to “pour out his spirit on all flesh.”

⁷ Joel 2:13.

⁸ Leonard Ravenhill, *Revival Praying* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1982), 109-111.

⁹ Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *Revive Us Again* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 7.

¹⁰ Ibid., 7.

¹¹ Ibid., 7.

something to its true nature and purpose”¹² seems particularly relevant. Much has been written about who is the initiator of revival. Does revival transpire through the sovereign act of God or through the intercessory prayers of humanity? The answer to both questions is *yes*; it does not matter which comes first, since in finality a person cannot have one without the other. When revival comes people will seek God; when people seek God, He sends revival.

In the end, prayer and the sovereignty of God go hand in hand. God is without question the only One who can send true spiritual renewal, yet we are free moral agents to whom He responds. God himself calls on His people to petition Him for times of restoration throughout the Old and New Testaments. Kaiser suggests if we are using God’s sovereignty as an excuse for failing in areas of prayer and confession, it is not viable. He also asserts that we have not truly had revival since the last great revival in 1905-6.¹³ People must seek the face of God again if we are to see another such revival.

STUMBLING BLOCKS OF REVIVAL

It is apparent that the Christian world is in need of spiritual renewal. Wherein lies the problem? The sins of our nation and world as well as the church world are growing. Millions of babies have been aborted, and there are individuals who name themselves as Christians who still support leaders who aid the cause of the murder of the unborn. Child abuse, pornography, and widespread corruption in our judicial system and government are all too common. People are struggling with the sin of

¹² Ibid., 7.

¹³ Walter C. Kaiser Jr., Revive Us Again (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 18.

homosexuality. Many are contemplating the idea that someone can be saved and still practice such a life style. Some associations are even ordaining homosexuals as ministers of the Gospel. As the Old Testament prophets proclaimed, “good is called evil and evil is called good.”¹⁴ It appears that many have been bewitched and cannot discern any more between good and evil.

The same spiritual decline manifested in the world can also be seen within the church. Examples abound from almost all denominations. Church officials report that in one denomination, an official was distraught over a situation within a church that was supposed to be experiencing revival. After the “revival,” some of the congregation’s local leaders were exposed in “wife swapping.” In another situation, clergy were caught making trips together on which they had been involved in immoral sexual activity. Newspapers regularly report clergy who have been sent to prison for sexually assaulting minors. These are touchy issues, but they must be addressed if we are to experience forgiveness and renewal. The church, along with the world, is at a moral crossroads. The choices we make will determine if we experience a true spiritual revival or go further into sin.

Is it possible that a member of the clergy can be involved in such hedonistic crimes while preaching God’s word at our religious gatherings and still convince us that we have been in the presence of a Holy God? Have we not lied to ourselves about being in the presence of God? Why can we not sense that something is wrong? Can a minister who is steeped in sin lead others into an encounter with God’s

¹⁴ Isaiah. 5. 20. The prophet pronounces a woe unto “those that call evil good and good evil.”

presence? Such spiritual decay is a sign of the last days. It is more acceptable and more appealing within Christendom to pronounce blessings and revival in the land from our podiums of proclamation than to declare the previous challenge of repentance, prayer, and confession. Many passages within the New Testament do not describe the last days as being those of great blessing and revival, especially where the element of repentance and truth are absent.¹⁵

It would be better orthodoxy to conclude that our results are failing us and we indeed are in the last days. The scriptures states that the last days will be characterized by perilous times, selfishness, refusal to obey sound doctrine, a falling away, moral decay, and massive deception. This is not to infer that God cannot send revival where such conditions exist, but in God's omniscience, He foresaw that many would be unwilling to submit to His terms for spiritual cleansing. Have we experienced God? If we do not have the true results of meeting with God, what *are* the true results of experiencing God? What is the impact of the encounter?

Every action demands a reaction; therefore, there must be a human reaction or call in response to coming into contact with a Holy God. Can we gather into our synagogues of worship, believe that God's presence has been manifested, and walk intentionally back into a life that both conscience and scripture teach is contrary to God's nature? It is obvious that humanity is in need of being transformed by the presence of God. What are the effects when God responds to those needs? Before we explore the great spiritual theology of the past concerning revival, it is paramount

¹⁵ Various passages in the New Testament convey the end times as a time of spiritual decay. See Matthew 24:11-13. 2 Thessalonians 2:1-3. 2 Timothy 3.

that we look first at the standard by which all ideas and standards must be judged, the Holy Scripture.

CHAPTER ONE: HOLINESS DEFINED

There is probably no other term used more frequently or associated as much with the person and character of God than the term “holy.” Countless essays, books, sermons, lectures, and ideas have been given to describe the holiness of God. Denominations have debated and argued various ideas concerning sanctification and its ramifications in the life of the believer. It has been one area of theology that has brought about divisions among various religious associations. Realizing that all of us bring a certain “personal” bias to scripture, it is still possible to be relatively objective in describing a strong biblical foundation for our understanding of the holiness of God.

What did the writers of the scripture have in mind when they spoke of the holiness of God? Often our perception or understanding of holiness is derived from our upbringing and religious background. We must lay that aside and look at what and how holiness was understood in the Old Testament. Drawing from the foundation of how we learned our language as a child, forming ideas about items based on how and what they were associated with (such as hot/cold and ice/fire), we will use the same foundation with the concept of holiness in the Old Testament. Just as our understanding of our mother language grew, so also will our concept of holiness as God reveals deeper and broader revelations of his character and holiness throughout the scripture. Also we must note that in the Old and New Testaments the words “holy, hallow, and holiness” are interchangeable with “saint, sanctify, and

sanctification” without damaging the context of scripture, since they come from the same root Hebrew term *qadash*, and the Greek term *hagios*.¹

G van der Leeuw defines the ‘holy’ as “what has been placed within boundaries, the exceptional (Latin Sanctus)....Whoever is confronted with potency clearly realizes that he is in the presence of some quality....which cannot be evoked from something else but which can be designated only by religious terms such as sacred and numinous.”² According to K. Goldammer, people sense that the “holy” is something totally different from themselves, implying a *qualitative* distinction between the divine on the one hand, and human beings and the world on the other.³ The etymology of the root word and its derivatives is still unsettled. The suggestion that the root Hebrew term (*qds*) {possibly a combination of “to burn” (*yqd*) and “fire” (*es*)} might have originally referred to the burnt offering or to anything consecrated to God has not had the support of some interpreters.⁴ Most concur the term had a basic meaning, “separate, sunder,” in the sense of separated from the old.⁵

Most theological words have had their roots born in the common soil and language of everyday life. However, when looking at the term “holiness,” it seems that its prior usage has become almost undistinguishable in the early twilight of history, and it took on an entirely new concept. Thus, whatever the earlier significance was, is of little or no loss. As Greathouse notes, “The semantic origin of this noun is so lost in the midst of ancient obscurity that there can be no absolute

¹ James Strong, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980)

² G. Johannes Botterweck, Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament Volume 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing , 1988-89), 522.

³ Ibid., 522.

⁴ Ibid., 523.

⁵ Ibid., 523.

certainty about its earliest meaning.”⁶ He states two major theories which have been introduced. The first has been based on the similarity of the term with a Babylonian one and suggests the meaning “bright” or “clear.” The second conjectures the meaning “of separation.” The meaning “to separate” is favored by many scholars, but the fact that the term rarely, if ever, occurs in a secular setting makes any positive conclusion in this regard difficult because of the limited evidence on which to base philological comparison.⁷ Within the context of Exodus, it seems the latter is more acceptable. “At the Exodus the word came suddenly into very common use, like the word ‘photograph’ in our day, to denote a new conception, an offspring of a new revelation from God.”⁸ Since it was applied to objects, places, and people so many and so various, its meaning should be clearly and accurately defined in the minds of the Israelites. As they understood its meaning and description as it was used and defined by God, so may we as we look into the Word of God.

The word for holiness does not appear in the book of Genesis in the Authorized Version.⁹ In Genesis we do have the term “sanctified” as it is applied to the Sabbath, but even then we must remember that the author of Genesis¹⁰ is still drawing its literary form from the voice of Sinai. The Hebrew word most often used for holiness (*qadash*) does not appear in scripture before Exodus.¹¹ The term “holy” was not

⁶ William M. Greathouse, Wholeness in Christ (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1998), 14.

⁷ R. Laird Harris, Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament (Seattle, WA 2003) BibleSoft CD-ROM.

⁸ J. Agar Beet, Holiness (Salem, OH: Schmul Publishing Company, 1985), 12.

⁹ Genesis 2. 3. This passage states that God sanctified the Sabbath and blessed it.

¹⁰ If Jewish tradition holds true then the author of Genesis would have been Moses, who would have without doubt drawn from his Sinai encounters with God for his understanding of holy, even from its usage in Genesis.

¹¹ R Hollis Gause, “Holiness,” (lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee on February 8, 2001).

revealed definitely until the time of the prophet Moses; thus the term “holiness” was one of the most conspicuous terms used in defining the Mosaic Covenant. The study of the concept of holiness must therefore begin in the book of Exodus.

CHAPTER TWO: HOLINESS IN EXODUS

In Exodus 3:5¹ we find the first encounter with the term “holy,” as it appears in the Authorized Version: “Then he (*God*) said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” The site of the bush is described as being “holy ground.”² The bush is most likely the prickly type known as *Rubus Sanctus*; it grows about a yard high and has flowers that resemble small roses and fruit like raspberry that turns black when it is ripened. The remarkable phenomenon of the bush burning and yet being unconsumed arouses Moses’ curiosity. He is informed to approach no further and to remove his shoes, which are likely sandals. The verb used for “approach” is frequently used as a technical term to describe an approach to the Presence for God in worship or to seek an oracle.³

Moses knows nothing about the sanctity of the environs of the bush that he sees. It was not considered proper or respectful to come into a sacred place without first casting off one’s footgear, a ritual still practiced among eastern religions today.⁴ Many Easterners take off their shoes as we take off our hats, though the Eastern idea

¹ G. Johannes Botterweck, Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament Volume 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988-89), 529. J text prior to the revelation to Moses in Exodus 3 avoids all *qds* derivatives.

² R. Alan Cole, Tyndale Old testament Commentaries Exodus. (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979). Holy ground: made holy by the presence of God, and by the Self-revelation that He will make there. This is preferable to assuming that it was already a Midianite ‘holy bush’. Had it been, the son-in-law of the Midian’s priest would surely have known all about it.

³ John I. Durham, Word Biblical Commentary Exodus (Waco, TX: Word Books Publisher, 1987), 57.

⁴ R. Alan Cole, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries Exodus (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 65. There are two possible origins of this mark of reverence. First, it may be the sign of acceptance of a servant’s position, for a slave went barefoot (Luke 15:22). Secondly, it may be a relic of very early days when men laid aside all covering and pretense to approach their god. Early Sumerian priests performed their duties naked, although the Israelite priests always wore a linen kilt, for modesty’s sake (Exodus 20:26).

is not the same as the Western. In the Western mindset, the removal of the hat is a symbol of reverence for the place we enter, rather than of the God who is worshipped there. In the Eastern mindset, the removal of shoes is a confession of personal defilement and conscious unworthiness to stand in the presence of personal, unspotted holiness.⁵ In Joshua 5:15, Joshua encounters the angel of the Lord and is told to remove his sandals because the site is holy. Others observe it is likely that the Tabernacle priests ministered barefoot, noting Exodus 28 prescribes no footgear, while 30:18-31 and 40:30-32 require priests to wash their feet.⁶ The biblical mandate for an *encounter* with God's Holy Spirit is a complete comprehension that in our own righteousness, service, ceremonies, prayers, or even at our religious best, we are not worthy to even be in His presence. What do we need to bring an atmosphere to welcome God? We must have a confession of His immeasurable greatness and sacredness, while realizing no human agencies can make us worthy to approach His Person--we must approach in humility, reverence and *encounter him with our shoes off*.⁷

The underlying concept of holiness in this account is a radical break with the accepted pagan notions. In the pagan world the holy is such by virtue of the intrinsic "natural" mysterious quality of the place or object that is revered. Holiness for Israel would be based on a God who is outside of nature, who created it and is sovereign over it. There is no room for any possibility of an independent or inherent holiness. That which is holy, be it temporal or spatial, possesses the quality based solely upon

⁵ Robert Jamieson, A.R. Fausset, David Brown, Jamieson Fausset and Brown Commentary (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

⁶ William A. Propp, The Anchor Bible Exodus (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 200.

⁷ Isaiah 6:5, Isaiah encounters God and is overwhelmed with God's greatness and his own mortality.

the divine will.⁸ “Israel’s concept of holiness was not only dynamic but moral: it was constituted not only by the active revelation of God, but by the nature of the One who so revealed himself. This is the first occurrence of the word “holy” in the Bible, and it is significant that the concept is linked with God.”⁹

God proceeds to inform Moses that He is the covenant God of the patriarchs. God’s covenant was one that was embodied in visible places and things and, therefore, made those objects partly or altogether inaccessible to man. What is God communicating in this passage if not that the ground stood in special relation to Him or His presence, and because of this, it could not be walked upon or used except by His command?

HOLY DAY

In Exodus 12:16 we see again, “And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you.” On this occasion, not a place but a time period was claimed by God for His people, not for their own interests but for His purpose, as it related to the feast of unleavened bread. “A convocation was a sacred assembly or calling of people for rest and worship.”¹⁰ This time period became so sacred and special unto Israel that the previous first month, which marked the beginning of their calendar year, was omitted and now the month of Nisan (the Passover month) marked the

⁸ Nahum M. Sarna, Exploring Exodus: The Heritage of Biblical Israel (New York: Schocken Books Press, 1987), 39-40.

⁹ R. Alan Cole, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries Exodus (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 65.

¹⁰ Jack W. Hayford, The Spirit-Filled Life Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 99.

beginning of their sacred calendar year.¹¹ The Passover was of such significance that its annual remembrance had to be kept from becoming episodic. “The special days of assembly, the special diet for all the days, the additional sacrifices---hammered home, not as a casual, annual raising of the hat to a past truth, but as a serious focusing of life’s program on a foundational event of miraculous proportions and its continuing and contemporary significance.”¹²

HOLY CLAIM

In Exodus 13:2 God commands Moses, “Sanctify unto me the all the first born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both man and beast: both of man and of beast it is mine.” When this is compared to Numbers 13:2-3,¹³ it is clear that God is stating explicitly that He is claiming persons and animals for His own purposes. As suggested earlier, one could easily insert the term “holy” in the place of “sanctify” and do no damage to the meaning of this passage. It would simply read, “make holy” unto me all the firstborn. It has been suggested that this can also mean “give over to Yahweh’s possession.”¹⁴ What is understood is that the firstborn would be dedicated to God. There is an emphasis on the “I” in verse twelve; God is making it evident who is making the selection. “The firstborn were to be holy in the sense that they were to stand in a special relation to God as His property, and were to

¹¹ Goerge D. Voorhis, *Notes on the Pentateuch* USA, 199.

¹² J.A. Motyer, *The Message of Exodus* (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 150.

¹³ And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine; Because all the firstborn are mine; for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the firstborn in Israel, both man and beast: mine they shall be: I am the Lord”

¹⁴ G. Johannes Botterweck, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988-89), 531.

be touched by man only according to the bidding and to work out the purposes of God. In other words, they were not man's but God's."¹⁵

This consecration involved dedication to God. The direction was positive, for the object dedicated was set apart exclusively for the use of God. Too often the practice has been approached only from a negative perspective with consecration having been understood by some as only implying separation from the world. "While negative action may be involved in dedication, it is secondary. The primary meaning of the word is that of being set apart, dedicated."¹⁶ God is Creator; thus all of the herd and its offspring belong to Him and share in His holiness. Because it shared in His holiness it was taboo for man, off limits. Therefore, he could not appropriate it for himself. The principle is that the part stood for the whole. Through the dedication of the firstborn to the Lord, all succeeding children were blessed in belonging to the Lord and for His service.

Numbers 8:17 states: "For all the firstborn of the children of Israel are mine, both man and beast: on the day that I smote every firstborn in the land of Egypt I sanctified them for myself." It is evident that "set apart" could again be translated "sanctified" and no damage is done to the text. We are not told in what way this sanctification or consecration worked out in the lives of the firstborn. It is possible that they could be the young men functioning as priests in Exodus 24:5.¹⁷ There has been an uncritical acceptance by many of the ancient Jewish tradition that the "young men" were first-

¹⁵ J. Agar Beet, Holiness (Salem, OH: Schmul Publishing Company, 1985), 15.

¹⁶ Clifton J. Allen, The Broadman Bible Commentary Genesis-Exodus (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1973), 362.

¹⁷ And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the Lord.

born sons of the elders because priestly duties normally fell upon them.¹⁸ This deserves consideration, for the Lord's highest purpose for Israel was that she would be a "kingdom of priests." (Ex. 19:6). Following the incident of the golden calf and the separation of the tribe of Levi (Exodus 32), the Lord states that He took the Levites for their special service, literally "in the place of all the firstborn among the sons of Israel."¹⁹

HOLY GOD

In Exodus 15: 11, 13, respectively, the question is asked of God, "Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" "Thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation." The writer is simply shedding light on the fact that only God is holy, and His dwelling place is therefore also holy. The Holiness of God is attested to; He and only He is holy. "His 'otherness' is his total, perfect, absolute, changeless—and dangerous—moral purity."²⁰ R. Hollis Gause writes, "It is God's holiness that defines all holiness. We must not define the nature of God out of ourselves, but out of what God has revealed about Himself. God says of Himself that He alone is God."²¹ So, by His nature, God is distinct from and separated from all other beings. God is holy because of the glory/majesty of His being. Some scholars refer to this as the majestic holiness of God.²²

¹⁸ H.L. Ellison, *The Daily Study Bible Exodus* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press 1982), 135.

¹⁹ J.A. Motyer, *The Message of Exodus* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 2005), 152-53.

²⁰ J.A. Motyer, *The Message of Exodus* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press 2005), 167.

²¹ R. Hollis Gause, "Holiness", (lecture presented at the Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee on Feb 8, 2001). Isaiah 43: 10,11. Ye are my witnesses saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I am the Lord; and beside me there is no savior.

²² Ibid.

In this passage the writer is looking back at the grand result of the exodial crises. It was a conflict between two spiritual kingdoms—the kingdom of light and true religion on the one hand, and that of darkness and idolatrous superstition on the other, carried on in a series of appalling calamities upon Egypt and culminating in the awful catastrophe of the Red Sea. God clearly demonstrated the utter insignificance, or nothingness, of all the gods of Egypt against the greatness of His Sovereignty. *Glorious in Holiness*—no attribute in the character of God presents a more striking contrast to the groveling qualities ascribed to the pagan deities than His purity or holiness. [The Septuagint renders it: *dedoxamenos en hagiois*, glorified in the holy ones – i.e., among saints and angels, or in holy things.]²³ Such glorious holiness cannot be approached without the deepest reverence and fear, even by the angels, who veil their faces before the majesty of God. How then should man, who is only sin and dust, approach the presence of his Maker!²⁴

“Holiness, *qodesh*, is the sublime and incomparable majesty of God, exalted above all the imperfections and blemishes of the finite creature.”²⁵ The singer passes in survey all the mighty acts of the Lord, which were wrapped up in this miraculous overthrow of the Egyptians, but the words no longer refer to the destruction of Pharaoh and his host. “What Egypt had experienced would come upon all the enemies of the Lord and His people. Neither the idea of the earth swallowing them,

²³ Robert Jamieson, A.R. Fausset, David Brown, Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

²⁴ Adam Clarke. Adam Clarke’s Commentary (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

²⁵ C. F. Keil, F. Delitzsch. Keil and Delitzsch Commentary of the Old Testament (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

nor the use of the imperfect, is applicable to the destruction of the Egyptians (v 1, 4, 5, 10, 19, the perfect is applied to is as already accomplished).”²⁶

HOLY NATION

In Exodus 19:6 God lays claim to the entire nation of Israel, stating, “And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shall speak to the children of Israel.” Insight is given by the preceding verse: “ye shall be a peculiar treasure to me above all people: for all the earth is mine.” God informs Israel that they would stand in special relation to Him above all the people of the earth, thus explaining the terminology, “holy nation,” and just as the firstborn should stand in an intimate position to Him, so now would the nation of Israel stand in a similar, though not exact, position. Even here we now look ahead with the expectation of the holiness which is imparted to all believers in the Church of Jesus Christ, which Peter alludes to in 1 Peter 2:9.²⁷

Israel as the “special treasure” would become God’s prized possession in all the earth by her commitment to Him in covenant. As a “kingdom of priests” the Israelites would be an extension throughout the world of the Lord’s ministering presence. Israel was not to be a kingdom run by politicians and power, but of priests depending on faith in Yahweh. As a “holy people,” they are to be a people set apart, different from all other people by what they are and are becoming—“a display-people, a showcase to the world how being in covenant with Yahweh changes

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Peter states to the church at various parts of Asia Minor that they were “a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people,” thus alluding to the same mindset that God had spoken to Israel as a nation. He goes on to state in that same verse why they were special: “that ye should show forth the praises of him that called you out of darkness into his marvelous light”--their relationship to God.

people.”²⁸ At first “holy” meant “dedicated” to God without any particular moral connotations. This kind of holiness was contagious (Ex. 19:12) and might be dangerous or fatal. It later became a compelling moral demand on His people (Leviticus 20:7) because of the revealed nature of Yahweh.

In both Testaments the word rendered “kingdom” has a somewhat different connotation to what it usually has in the English. In our present day, we would think of a kingdom as being an area over which a king rules. In the Hebrew and the Greek the stress is on the fact of sovereignty; the phrase stresses the fact that the priests are those over whom God has complete control.²⁹ The emphasis is not on the territory but on the authority of the King, the Divine Presence.

It is worth noting that the Hebrew word for priest (*kohen*) is not the Semitic word (*chomer*) which is used in scripture for the priests of the “high places” (2 Kings 23:5). Martin Buber has suggested that *kohen* means, “one who has the entrée either to the king or God.”³⁰ The Hebrew has two words for nation or people (‘am, Greek *laos* and *goi*, Greek *ethos*), which differ little in their meaning, except that the former is used consistently in reference to Israel and the Church, and the latter to other peoples, Gentiles, the heathen. “Here where one expects this usage to be followed, *goi* is used for Israel, *ethnos* of the Church in 1 Peter 2:9. The election of Israel, of the Church, is not due to their being different from the non-elect. They are made different by the fact that they become ‘holy,’ set apart for God’s use. Whenever Israel or the Church ceases to be holy, set apart from the world for God, they revert to the level of

²⁸ John I. Durham, Word Book Commentary Exodus (Waco, TX: Word Book Publishers, 1987), 263.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ H.L. Ellison, The Daily Study Bible Series Exodus (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 100.

mankind around them.”³¹ Their holiness resides only as they maintain their relationship to God and purpose.

HOLY MOUNTAIN

In Exodus 19:23 it is noted that God commanded Moses to, “set bounds around the mountain and sanctify it.” Again the implication was for Moses to mark off the mountain as belonging to God, and therefore it could not be walked upon except at God’s bidding; hence it was holy. If someone were to break forth and touch the mountain, God had said they would die; only those who were allowed by God could tread upon the mountain that His presence had claimed in the form of a thick cloud. One major lesson that is taught in the Law of Moses was the ability to make a difference between the holy and unholy, the common and uncommon, land or people or things that belonged to humanity, and land or people or things that belonged to God. It is important to note God had also commanded the people to sanctify themselves in verses 9 and 14. Here God is requiring a people whom He has already referred to as a holy nation to sanctify their lives. How can a multitude that has already been called holy make itself holy or sanctified? A deeper understanding of God’s holiness is being defined. Items that are claimed by God for His service are deemed holy along with certain restrictions placed upon those things that God has claimed.

Moses was to “sanctify” the people in preparation for meeting God on the mountain, a ritual including the washing of clothes. The priest must consecrate

³¹ Ibid., 101.

themselves lest Yahweh, “break out against them.”³² The limits around the mountain were to keep it holy, thus unapproachable. Contact with the holy is dangerous for the unauthorized; therefore, the limits are set around the mountain.³³

HOLY PLACE

In Exodus 25:8 the people of God are called to make Him a Sanctuary, again the same root Hebrew term *qadash*, a holy place. The holy place, (*miqdosh*) which Israel is to prepare has a wider reference than just the Tabernacle; its broader reference is to any and every place of Yahweh’s theophany (Exodus 15:17). Any place that Yahweh comes to dwell is in that coming and residence a “holy place,” and any such place is to be respected as such by the people of God.³⁴

In Exodus 26:33, we read of two chambers located in the sanctuary, the outer chamber titled the “holy place,” and the inner chamber, given a superlative name, the “most holy” place (holiness of holinesses). Its purpose was to be the place of the ark of covenant, or testimony, where God would meet with the high priest to minister to His people, the nation of Israel. Just as Moses saw the burning bush and was informed that the ground was holy, so also now there would be a place where God would covenant to meet man; it would be the most sacred place on the earth. This writer thinks the term “sacred” better describes in our culture a healthier understanding of the concept of holy. A sacred place or item is often treated with high regard because of its uniqueness; God’s chamber would be the most hallowed place in all the earth. It is of extreme importance not to overlook that fact that even

³² Exodus 19:22

³³ G. Johannes Botterweck, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988-89), 532.

³⁴ John I. Durham, *Word Biblical Commentary Exodus* (Waco, TX: Word Books Publisher, 1987), 254-255.

though this place was the “most holy,” humanity would commune with God through the mercy seat, the grace of God in the Old Testament.

HOLY TOUCH

In Exodus 29:37 Moses is instructed to sanctify the brazen altar: “whatever touches the altar shall be holy.” In verse 37, we are introduced to a far-reaching concept in Hebrew theology. God commanded seven days of consecration for the brazen altar, making atonement for it—a similar act had to take place on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:18). God identifies that sin is contagious. The very bringing of parts of the sin offering onto the altar in itself defiled it. But holiness is also contagious: “whatever touches the altar” becomes holy by the touch of God or what is in the service of God. Therefore, when something was placed on the altar, it ceased to be man’s any longer and became God’s.

In this modern age the average Christian has largely forgotten what the impact of the world means. Never has the pressure to conform to this world been stronger or more subtle; never has the need for the transformation of our minds been more necessary. The Holy Spirit still produces saints, as the term is popularly understood, but they are all too few and far between, but when we meet them we find their lives contagious. The contagion of holiness in the Tabernacle had, as its effect, extreme care with holy things for anything touching them was automatically lost to its owner and became God’s Property.³⁵

To this Jesus makes reference in Matthew 23:19³⁶, where He states the altar sanctifies (*hagios*) or makes holy the gift. This may be understood as implying that

³⁵ H.L. Ellison, The Daily Study Bible Series Exodus (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 159-160.

³⁶ Matthew 23:19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

whatever was laid upon the altar became the Lord's property and must be wholly devoted to sacred uses.³⁷ The message is clear-- when one *encountered the holy*; it was more than casual contact. It made the item and or person to become holy, thus becoming the property of and dedicated to the service of God/Yahweh.

Verse 21 of the same chapter states that Aaron and his sons and their clothes were to be hallowed, thereto making them holy in service to the Lord. It should be noted that their garments were made hallowed by the blood that was on the altar. In the priest's ordination, that blood was applied to the priest's ear to signify that he would hear only the Word of God, to his thumb to signify that he would rightly perform the duties of the priests, and to the toe to signify that he would walk in the path of righteousness.³⁸ What a beautiful foretaste of the Holiness that we enjoy through the blood of Jesus. We are made Holy not by the application of the blood of goats and rams but by the precious blood of Christ.³⁹

HOLY OIL

In Exodus 30:22-33 the ingredients are given for a "holy anointing oil" that was to be placed upon items that were to be in service for the Lord and the ministry of the Tabernacle. The anointing oil was a blend of myrrh, cinnamon, aromatic cane, cassia, and olive oil.⁴⁰ Myrrh was an important ingredient in the perfumes, while

³⁷ Adam Clarke, Adam Clarke's Commentary (Seattle, Washington 2003) BibleSoft CD-ROM.

³⁸ Jack W. Hayford, The Spirit Filled Life Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 125.

³⁹ Hebrews 13:12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

⁴⁰ Exodus 30:23-24 Take thou unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels. And of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin. The quantities were approximately 14 ½ pounds of myrrh, 7 pounds of cinnamon, 7 pounds of cassia, 21 pounds of dry spice mixed with 5 to 6 quarts of olive oil and 14 pounds of liquid myrrh. The whole solid substance was probably cooked until all the water evaporated, then mixed with the oil and myrrh and boiled again. George D. Voorhis, Notes on the Pentateuch USA, 254.

cassia was an aromatic bark (both are used to describe the fragrance of king's robes).⁴¹ Although the exact weight of the shekel of the sanctuary is unknown, it has been reckoned to weigh 0.403 ounces, while the hen was a unit of measure equal to about one gallon or six quarts. Hence, the anointing oil prescribed in verse 22 would have been approximately 37+ pounds, plus the weight of 1 gallon of olive oil.⁴²

So unique and sacred was this oil, God states if anyone makes any like it or uses it at their own discretion he shall be "cut off from his people" or made an outcast (v.33). Everything in service to God that He had lay claim to was anointed with this oil: the tabernacle (sanctuary), ark of testimony, the table of shewbread and its vessels, the candlestick and its vessels, the altar of incense, the altar of burnt offering, the laver and its foot or stand, Aaron and his sons. All were anointed to signify they were consecrated in service to God. Note that God proclaims the oil is not to be poured upon man's flesh or put upon a stranger. It was never to be reproduced for common use or used on one's flesh except the priests. The inference must be that it is only to be put upon a person who is in service to God, claimed by God, for the instructions were to anoint Aaron and his sons.

This special-formula oil was to be used to anoint the symbols of Yahweh's nearness already identified as sacred by their close association with His presence, the Tabernacle itself, and the furnishings of the Tabernacle and its courtyard. This anointing amounted to a formal declaration these items were all in the category of "most holy" and anyone or anything coming into contact with them would become

⁴¹ Psalms 45:8 All thy garments (robes) smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

⁴² Clifton J. Allen, The Broadman Bible Commentary Genesis-Exodus (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1973), 390.

infectiously holy and so must be, “appointed to such contact, through ordination (Numbers 4:15-20), appropriately isolated and dealt with (so Uzzah is stricken dead for touching the Ark [2 Samuel 6:6-8])...those who misuse the special oil or incense were to be ostracized (Exodus 30:33).⁴³ The anointing oil represents the Holy Spirit. The mixture of fragrance and oil suggest His healing and anointing. He is never to be counterfeited. Whoever tries to substitute Him is under God’s judgment; He is not to be given to this world,⁴⁴ but to those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ.⁴⁵

God claims a day as His in Exodus 31:14, the Sabbath, a holy day, in that man could not use the time as he would but as God instructed. The reason for the fresh reminder of the fourth commandment at this time is the people were eager to finish the tabernacle God had instructed them to build, and in their eagerness to have His presence in their midst, God did not want them encroaching on the sanctity of the Sabbath. They might even assume the labor for the tabernacle was a sacred work and therefore it would be a high merit- an acceptable tribute- to pursue construction without a day’s repose. Therefore, at the commencement a proper warning is given. God was saying by implication that the making of the Tabernacle should not take precedence over the Sabbath. There is also an allusion to the separation of Israel as a special people to the service of God; the keeping of the Sabbath was a sign of their national obligation to obey the whole law. “The purpose of God in making a faithful

⁴³ John I. Durham, Word Biblical Commentary Exodus (Waco, TX: Word Books Publisher, 1987), 407.

⁴⁴ Acts 8:20-23. Peter pronounces judgment upon Simon because he tries to purchase the Holy Spirit.

⁴⁵ Leo C. Cox, Beacon Bible Commentary Genesis-Deuteronomy (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1969), 290.

performance of the Sabbath duties a sign between Him and the Israelites was that they might become a ‘holy’ and a ‘blessed’ people.”⁴⁶

Concerning the breaking of the Sabbath, which was already included in the Decalogue,⁴⁷ the injunction has already been addressed to the people (Exodus 20:8). The object here is to declare an infraction of the commandment to be a capital offence. He who was “cut off” (verse 14) from the people had by his offence put himself out of terms of the covenant and was an outlaw. Only on such an offence of this nature, when one’s crimes affected the well being of the nation, could the public authority inflict death.⁴⁸

HOLY ENCOUNTER

God declares in Exodus 29:44, “I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons.” We are told that it was God who did the sanctifying, not man, “for the devotion of these objects originated in God not man.”⁴⁹ With just a few limitations, nothing could be given to God but what He had already claimed. Therefore, we have established the biblical precedent that holiness was God’s claim to the ownership and the exclusive use of sundry men, places, items, and portions of time. Because of that claim the objects were pronounced as holy. Holiness is revealed in the book of Exodus as it relates to the

⁴⁶ Robert Jamieson, A.R. Fausset, David Brown, Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

⁴⁷ Ibid. The moral law, or Decalogue, as it is called, from being summarily comprehended in “these ten words”, was not promulgated from Sinai. It was coeval with the creation of man, and stamped upon his nature. But the original impress on the human heart had become, through long and increasing corruption, almost obliterated; and if it was not to be totally lost, was necessary that it should be republished and incorporated with divine revelation. It was, in one sense, a republication by divine authority of the *law of nature*. Therefore it was not discussed at length, in Leviticus there will be evidence of a practical pursuit of the law of God as it goes beyond general moral and becomes personal conduct.

⁴⁸ Albert Barnes, Barnes’s Notes (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

⁴⁹ J. Agar Beet, Holiness (Salem, OH: Schmul Publishing Company, 1985), 17.

Divine presence and will. This *holiness* may be considered *positional holiness*. We have also seen on some occasions, due to the demands of that claim of God, that people were asked to sanctify themselves or what this writer calls *practical holiness*. Together they will form what this writer identifies as the dynamic duo, the initial and progressive, the position that one has in Christ and the result (pursuit) of His commands.⁵⁰ This is the result of an *encounter with God*.

At a later time in this work this writer hopes to establish out of this foundation the New Testament concept of God's cleansing power that sanctifies due to His touch or claim and His command that we sanctify ourselves. We will also find as we move further into the Old Testament the same concept of God demanding, or commanding, of his people that they should be holy because He has chosen them for His possession. *Holiness* is a state that must begin as a work of God. We cannot make our lives holy apart from the touch or claim of God because only He is holy. So no amount of religious activity or devotion can cleanse us apart from the presence of God. And as a result of that claim, or the impact of that touch, there will be a pursuit to keep our lives holy in service to Him.

As other passages are examined, we will discover the ethical and moral expectation of the response to God's claim. Because we belong to God there are certain standards He expects and even commands in the lives of His chosen. Practical areas of day-to-day living were addressed in other areas of the Torah, understanding that God did not give vague ideas nor did He choose to leave Israel in doubt about what was to be expected of them; indeed the law was pressed out to some of the most

⁵⁰ Matthew 6:46. And why call me Lord, Lord and do not the things which I say? The inference is, if we truly call him Lord we should keep his words.

minute detail. Interrelations among Israelites, family values, and the treatment of strangers, morality, worship, and many other areas of Israel's lifestyle were impacted by God's claim. There was a time when God would wink at ignorance, but the law came and with it the knowledge of sin⁵¹—that is humanity's responsibility. So we perceive that just as under the Old Covenant, God's claim or touch makes the object holy, resulting in a call to an obedient lifestyle, even in the New Covenant there is the touch that makes holy through the blood of Christ⁵² and the call to obedience.⁵³ This realization gives us a deeper understanding and insight to the call to Holiness by God. The sanctifying work of God's claim is not only a work wrought in our life by His cleansing touch, but also a call of obedience to His word to keep ourselves pure.

⁵¹ Acts. 17:30.

⁵² Hebrews 13:12 states wherefore Jesus that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. As the animal's body was burned outside the camp in the Old Testament (Leviticus 16) so also Jesus suffered outside the city of Jerusalem (John 19). I Thessalonians. 5:23.

⁵³ I Thessalonians. 4:4-5.

CHAPTER THREE: HOLINESS IN LEVITICUS

In the book of Leviticus the Sinai tradition of covenantal commandments resumes. It is important to consider the meaning of “holiness” as it is seen in the book of Leviticus. On the one hand the term “holiness” bespeaks *separateness*, almost in the manner of an elemental religious taboo, the affirmation that God is so different from Israel that she dare not draw near to God or be in the presence of God without the most careful preparations. On the other hand, the term develops in Israel’s usage in an ethical direction so that the term may refer to *righteousness* according to the commandments of the Law. The term has a rich usage because it seeks to articulate what is most characteristic, hidden, and inscrutable about God.¹ It is therefore this writer’s intent to focus on the aspect of holiness as it relates to *righteousness* or in obedience to the Torah.

Although there will be discussion on the concept of the *separateness* of God, there is the intent to converge more on the result of experiencing or *encountering* God through our obedience to His revelation. At large, the book of Leviticus is a priestly manual that includes instructions for the practice and the conduct of the priestly office—the worship of Yahweh. The priests are charged with two major tasks, to instruct Israel not to become defiled, and secondly, to purge the sanctuary when it is defiled. Their responsibility is described in two ways: “In chapters 1-16 holiness is situated in the cult; in chapters 17-26, holiness pertains in larger scope to the Promised Land. While the fundamental issues are the same in the two parts of the

¹ Walter Brueggemann, An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 67.

book, they are articulated in different ways...”² In other words, chapters 1-16 addressed to the priesthood, deals with the role of the priest in performing the rituals of worship, torah to priests, while chapters 17-26, addressed to the people of Israel, deal with the requirements of holiness, Torah from the priests.

Leviticus is a book of instructions given not only to the priests, but also to the people of Israel that they might know how to perform the worship demanded by God’s covenant in a manner effective for them and acceptable to Yahweh. Included are varied instructions on how to live (*righteousness*) so that such worship would be acceptable to the Lord. People who walk with God must be holy, because He is holy. This is the objective for the heavy emphasis upon the difference between the clean and unclean, the pure and the abominable, the holy and the unholy. “Leviticus is a handbook on ‘the holy.’ The holiness demanded is not merely the ceremonial. It is also the ethical and social, as in c. 19, which is largely a recapitulation of the Decalogue. The concern of the book is inner, moral righteousness. It is from Leviticus that we get the command, ‘thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself’ (19:18). The meaning of this requirement is spelled out, and that spelling out is in terms of personal and social righteousness.”³

² Walter Brueggemann, An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 68.

³ Dennis F. Kinlaw, Beacon Bible Commentary Genesis-Deuteronomy (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1969), 321.

FIGURE 3-1
THE TERM "HOLY" IN THE TORAH⁴

BOOK	TOTAL VERSES	"HOLY"	"BEFORE YAHWEH"	"TO/UNTO YAHWEH"	"FEAR"
GENESIS	1533	6	3	10	21
EXODUS	1213	71	21	47	14
LEVITICUS	859	109	57	91	8
NUMBERS	1289	72	35	61	3
DEUTERONOMY	959	17	23	31	38

Even though Leviticus is the *shortest* book of the torah, it contains the most occurrences of the words for "holy," "before Yahweh," and "to/unto Yahweh." All three terms seem to form a chiasm from Genesis to Deuteronomy, with increasing concentrations pointing to Leviticus as the central book on holiness. Note the statistics on the word "fear." In Deuteronomy the "fear of God" is explicitly stated 38 times, but is rarely mentioned in the rest of the Torah. It was not necessary to encourage fear in the generation who had actually experienced the events recorded in Exodus-Numbers, but the new generation must be told that the holiness of God results in the fear of God.⁵

⁴ Lee Roy Martin, Pentecostal Explorations in the Old Testament: Leviticus In the Presence of the Holy One (Cleveland, TN: 2004) Professor of Hebrew at The Church of God Theological Seminary, Cleveland, Tennessee.

⁵ Ibid.

As has been previously stated, when Moses *encountered* the Presence of Yahweh, he did so with fear and reverence. In Judges 2:10 we are told after the death of Joshua, a servant of God who knew and *encountered* the presence of Yahweh with fear as Moses had, “there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.” Verse 11 states, “and the children of Israel did evil in the sight of Lord, and served Baalim.” The implication is *encountering* God produces a reverent obedience while continual disobedience is a sure sign we have not seen his works nor *encountered* his glory.

HOLINESS CODE

In the second half of Leviticus (chapters 16-26), scholars have recognized a more coherent collection of commandments, which are phrased with, “You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy,” Leviticus 19:2. Because of this statement throughout the collection, the materials have been identified as the “HOLINESS CODE.”⁶ The horizon of *holiness* in this collection is much wider, because it concerns the scope of the Israelites as they conduct life in the Promise Land.

The possibility that people can experience the *holiness/righteousness* of God is represented by the biblical text: “For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy.... For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the Land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy (Leviticus 11:44-45). Three items should be acknowledged about this passage. First, it is hortatory/imperative...”Be ye holy...”, meaning it represents

⁶ Walter Bruggemann, An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 71.

God's will for His people in covenant fulfillment. Secondly, the standard for which the command is based on is the character of God, "for I am holy." Finally, this passage is grounded in the redemptive act of God in bringing His people out of bondage, therefore representing covenant fulfillment. The foundation of this exhortation is the assumption that in God's redemptive power, it is reasonable and attainable.⁷

God says of himself that he is pure; this is the fundamental meaning of the word "holy." It is more than the absence of impurity; it is the presence of all goodness. Some scholars refer to this as the ethical holiness of Yahweh. How can the *holiness/separateness* of God be described? The Lord says of Himself in Deuteronomy 6:4, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one." This implies that He is not one among many or the most powerful among many other gods. He is God, period. To even use the title God for another would be a lie, for only He is worthy to be titled God. There is no other like Him, or will there ever be any like Him. He is *Holy* other.

The *Holiness* of God can be represented in many ways. He is infinite in power, knowledge, presence, and perfect. He is above all, before all, and after all (Isaiah 44:6). In Him all things move and have their existence. He is creator-eternal. He is

⁷ R Hollis Gause, "Holiness", (lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee on February 8, 2001). Note: in idealism exhortations and demands are made that are impossible to fulfill, but spiritual holiness is not idealism. Idealism is a pagan philosophy that makes an uncrossable distinction between an ideal (spirit, heavenly, eternal) and the actual (physical, earthly temporal). Idealism can make no moral judgment because of its unreasonable and impossible standards. That means also that one cannot be judged for failing to achieve the ideal because it cannot be reached anyway. When these are concluded, the creature has no moral obligation anyway. The Bible never operates on this level. Its requirements of obedience are achievable in God's grace by the Blood of Christ.

Love. 1 John 4:7, 8 states, “Beloved let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God; and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” In this passage John defines for us what the love of God means, the giving of his Son for atonement for our sins (1John 4:9-10). It was a self-sacrificing Love.

God’s love is full of mercy, long suffering, goodness, kindness, integrity, beauty and virtue. It is the perfect union of *righteousness*: mercy and justice, patience and judgment, grace and punishment, benevolence and wrath. Others could be given, but the point is that the love of God is a perfect union of all divine perfection and action. Mercy never violates justice. They are united in love; love is their fulfillment.⁸

The holiness of God is the fullness of righteousness, grace, truth, goodness, and the absence of any quality that would create conflict among them. Within God there is nothing that would defile or corrupt His nature. “There is nothing that reduces His nature (in majesty or morality). “God is the fountainhead of all virtue and the measure of all that is right and holy. He is the perfect source of the law and promise and the perfect union of judgment and forgiveness.”⁹

The call for holiness in the lives of the Israelites does not call for them to take on these qualities in the sense that they reach a place of existence beyond improvement—not that we become like God in His glory.¹⁰ No, God does desire that His people live in harmony with Him—that they revere His holiness so much that

⁸ R Hollis Gause, “Holiness”, (lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee on February 8, 2001).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Attempts to try to be like God always have always been met with the judgment of God. See Jude 6 where disobedient angels are reserved in everlasting chains of darkness because they did not keep their first state.

they are willing to obey His laws in covenant relationship. God communicates to Israel in Leviticus 11:44 that His holiness is a shareable quality with the creature, in particular humans. This holiness is a moral mandate upon the creature.¹¹

FOUNDATIONAL HOLINESS

Leviticus 18 sets the stage for the rest of Book. Not only does it introduce the important theme of the people of a holy God to live holy lives, and so to be distinct from the pagan nations (verse 2-5), but also the structure of this chapter is very similar to the covenant treaty form common in the ancient Near East: “ (a) preamble—“ I am the Lord your God” (18:2), (b) historical retrospect—“Egypt, where you used to live” (v.3), (c) basic stipulation—“obey my laws” (v.4), (d) promise of blessing—“will live by them” (v.5), (e) detailed stipulations (vv.6-23), (f) curses for disobedience (vv.24-30).”¹² The prohibitions in Leviticus 18 are based on the sanctity of marriage and the need for stability in family life. These principles were the opposite of the pagan religions among the Canaanites, who promoted cultic prostitution and sexual promiscuity.

The phrase, “I am the Lord your God,” (v. 2) forms a preamble within the covenant treaty, but in the other five occurrences (vv. 4-6, 21, 30), it is more of a motivation for keeping God’s commandments. A similar phrase occurs in Exodus 20:2 and Deuteronomy 5:6, where the Ten Commandments are introduced. The exhortation to avoid the customs of the nations around them, particularly Egypt and Canaan, is based upon the person of God, and His holiness and Israel’s covenant

¹¹ R Hollis Gause, “Holiness”, (lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee on February 8, 2001).

¹² John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck, The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old Testament (USA: Scripture Press Publications, 1985), 200.

relationship with Him. God's integrated system of physical and spiritual commandments to provide an abundant life for Israel as His redeemed people is summarized as His decrees and laws. The motivation for obedience is clearly stated in verse 5, "which if a man do, he shall live in them;" the implication is the man who obeys the laws of God will enjoy life to the fullest.¹³ When people live the way God intended, in holiness, it produces happy people with fulfilled lives, (Leviticus 26:3-13). The restrictions in Leviticus 18 constitute one basis for a stable, happy family life. For the unregenerate or heathen who disobey God's laws, their lives will experience the curse of the Law, (Galatians 3:10).

Leviticus 18:6 states: "None of you shall approach to any that is near kin of him, to uncover their nakedness: I am the Lord." Laws against incest¹⁴ are introduced with the general prohibition, "near kin or kindred by blood (*she'er*) to him or flesh (*basar*)," to any flesh of his flesh: "to uncover (*lagalowt*) their nakedness (*'erwaah*)," to have sexual intercourse.¹⁵ "Flesh of flesh," is a flesh that is of his own flesh, belongs to the same flesh as himself (Genesis 2:24). It is applied to a blood relation, blood relationship being called (*sha'araah*) or flesh kindred in the Hebrew in verse 17.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Adam Clarke, Adam Clark's Commentary (Seattle, Washington 2003) BibleSoft CD-ROM. It must be evident that in the infancy of the world, persons very near of kin must have been joined in matrimonial alliances, and that even brothers must have matched with their own sisters. This must have been the case in the family of Adam. In these first instances necessity required this; when this necessity no longer existed, the thing became inexpedient and improper for two reasons. First, that the duties owing by nature to relative might not be confounded with those of a social or political kind; for could a man be a brother and a husband, a son and a husband, at the same time, and fulfill the duties of both? Impossible. Secondly, that by intermarrying with other families, the bonds of social compact might be strengthened and extended, so that the love of our neighbor, etc., might at once be felt to be not only a maxim of sound policy, but also a very practicable and easy duty; and thus feuds, divisions, and wars be prevented.

¹⁵ C. F. Keil, F. Delitzsch, Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament (Seattle, Washington 2003) BibleSoft CD-ROM.

In verses 7-17, sexual intercourse is forbidden (1) with a mother, (2) with a step-mother, (3) with a sister or half-sister, (4) with a granddaughter, the daughter of either son or daughter, (5) with the daughter of a step-mother, (6) with an aunt, the sister of either father or mother, (7) with the wife of an uncle on the father's side, (8) with a daughter-in-law, (9) with a sister-in-law, or brother's wife, (10) with a woman and her daughter, or a woman and her granddaughter, and (11) with sisters at the same time. God is concerned about the purity of the intimate relationships that are to be practiced within the bonds of matrimony. This standard was sharply at odds with the practice of the Israelite's neighbors.

The marriage laws and customs were much more lax among the Gentiles. "With the Egyptians it was lawful to marry sisters and half-sisters, and the licentiousness of the women was very great among them (Genesis 39:6). With the Persians, marriage was allowed with mother, daughter, and sister, and this is said to be the case with the Medians, Indians, and Ethiopians, as well as with the Assyrians. Whereas the Greeks and Romans abhorred such marriages, and the Athenians and Spartans only permitted marriages with half-sisters."¹⁶

In Leviticus 18: 20, the Lord commands, "Moreover thou shalt not lie carnally with thy neighbor's wife, to defile thyself with her." There are two types of adultery; double when between two married parties, single when one of the parties is married, the other person single. The principal part of the criminality of adultery¹⁷ is seen in

¹⁶C. F. Keil , F. Delitzsch, Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament (Seattle, Washington 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM..

¹⁷ Adam Clarke, Adam Clarke's Commentary (Seattle, Washington 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM. As to the word adultery, adulterium, is has probably been derived from the words ad alterius forum, to another's bed; for it is going to the bed of another man that constitutes the act and the crime.

the following. First, it robs a person of his or her right by taking the devotion and love of a companion. Secondly, it places possible offspring in jeopardy, by fathering or mothering children out of wedlock, thus not even possible placing them with their legitimate parents.¹⁸

In Exodus 20:14, the act itself, and everything leading to the act, is prohibited by this commandment. Jesus makes clear in Matthew 5:18, “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” “And not only adultery (the unlawful commerce between two married persons) is forbidden here, but also fornication and all kinds of mental and sensual uncleanness. All impure books, songs, paintings, etc. which tend to inflame and debauch the mind stand against this law.”¹⁹

Leviticus 18:21 forbids the dedication of children to the service of Molech, the national god of the Ammonites (1 Kings 17:41). Some view this as a ceremonial dedication by fire to Molech. “According to the testimony of the Rabbis, fathers, earlier theologians, ‘causing to pass through the fire’ denoted primarily going through the fire without burning, a februation, or purification through fire, by which children were consecrated to Molech; a kind of fire-baptism, which preceded the sacrificing,

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹ Adam Clarke, Adam Clarke’s Commentary (Seattle, Washington 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM. That fornication was included under this command we may gather from Matt 15:19, where Jesus expresses the sense of the different commandments by a word for each, and mentions them in the order in which they stand, but when he comes to the seventh he uses two words, adulteries (moicheiai) and fornications (perineia), to express its meaning, and then goes on to the eighth, etc.; demonstrating that fornication was understood to be comprehended under the command, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

and was performed, particularly in olden time, without sacrificing, or slaying and burning.”²⁰

Others feel that the children were actually burnt alive to this idol, a burnt offering.²¹ Still again others suggest that semen was offered up on the fire to this idol.²² Leo G. Cox comments, “The reference to Molech in V. 21 has been understood as referring to a pagan rite of throwing children into a raging fire in sacrifice. There is actually no reference to fire in the Hebrew text²³ here; note that “the fire” is in italics, indicating that it is a translator’s addition. Because of the context which is dealing with sexual irregularities, Snaith suggests that what is forbidden is the giving of children to the temple shrines for training as male or female prostitutes.”²⁴ The fact that some of the passages in the Old Testament are not clear enough, coupled with our limited knowledge of Israel’s neighbors, makes it difficult to know exactly what is referred to here other than illicit use of children, which probably was in a sexual context.

Leviticus 18:22 commands, “Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind: it is abomination.” The term “abomination” in the Hebrew is to “ebah” (*to-ay-baw*),

²⁰George D. Voorhis, Notes on the Pentateuch (USA: 1994), 322.

²¹Adam Clarke, Adam Clarke’s Commentary (Seattle, Washington 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM. In support of this idea there are scriptures, according to the opinion of commentators, which seem to indicate this strongly (Jeremiah 7:31 and Ezekiel 23:37-39). That others were only consecrated to his service by passing between two fires the rabbis strongly assert; and if Ahaz had but one son, Hezekiah (though it is probable he had others, 2 Chronicles 28:3), he is said to have passed through the fire to Molech, 2 Kings 16:3, yet he succeeded his father in the kingdom, Lev 18:1, therefore this could only be a consecration, his idolatrous father intending thereby to initiate him early into the service of this demon.

²² Ibid.

²³ Interlinear Bible: Old Testament (Seattle, Washington 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

²⁴Leo C. Cox, Beacon Bible Commentary Genesis-Deuteronomy (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1969), 370.

that is something morally disgusting or abhorrence in the sight of God.²⁵ It defines something or someone that is loathsome and detestable, something unique in the sense of being dangerous, sinister, and repulsive. When used with reference to God, the word describes people, things, acts, relationships, and characteristics that are detestable to Him because they are contrary to His nature. “People with habits loathsome to God are themselves detestable to Him.”²⁶

It seems that no other issue in scripture is more likely to provoke a heated discussion among contemporary Christians than the one presently discussed. Some suggest that homosexuality was practiced in Israel before the rise of the Levitical legislation, by leading figures, without condemnation: one example is the relationship of David and

Jonathan.²⁷ The fact that David marries Saul’s daughter (1 Samuel 18:17-27), plus his various other feminine interests (1 Samuel 25:39-43; 2 Samuel 3:2-5; 5:13-16), not to mention his Bathsheba affair (2 Samuel 11) clearly suggest his attitude towards homosexual practice. The fact that lesbian activity is not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible has provoked some to suggest it is not condemned. Yet in a patriarchal society

²⁵ James Strong, Strong’s Greek-Hebrew Definitions (Seattle, Washington 2003) BibleSoft CD-ROM.

²⁶ W.E. Vine, Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words (Seattle, Washington 2003) BibleSoft CD-ROM.

²⁷ Lloyd R. Baily, Smith and Helwys Bible Commentary Leviticus-Numbers (Macon, GA: Smith & Helwys Publishing Inc., 2005), 245-251. The close relationship between Jonathan and David in 1 Samuel 18:1-5, the term love (‘ahab) is used to describe his attitude. While the Hebrew verbal root used (‘ahab) can indicate sexual activity (1 Kings 11:1), it can also indicate love for one’s spouse (1 Samuel 1:5), parental love for a child (Genesis 37:3), and God’s love for Israel (Hosea 11:1). It has the same range of meanings as does the English word ‘love,’ plus the implications of loyalty. The context, however, makes it very clear that the verb is here used in its well-known sense of loyalty to an agreement; the word covenant is used in verse 3. Assyrian treaties commanded their vassal states to ‘love’ that is be loyal to the great king of Assyria. It is in this sense the verb is used in Leviticus 19:18, “You shall not take vengeance...against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

it would not be surprising to find a regulation addressed in the masculine, but intended for both genders. The Ten Commandments are addressed in the masculine singular, but no one would argue that women are allowed to steal, murder, and so forth.²⁸

Another suggestion is, one cannot condemn homosexuality on the basis of Genesis 19 because the phrase in verse 5, “that we may know them,” has a more usual meaning “get acquainted with.”²⁹ Therefore the true offense of Lot’s neighbors was violation of the rules of household hospitality (guests are to be given sanctuary as a sacred duty and other persons are to respect that status). Yet it is this sin that is at the core of the “parade examples” of misbehavior that the text cites. It is clearly this type of sexual desire that inspired the attack upon Lot’s house and thus triggered the destruction of the city. Some will cite the limitation on how many times this sin is addressed to weaken its place in scripture as a major offense. But there is no teaching of this type ever used by the church based on the number of prohibitions needed for a commandment to be taken seriously. Only once does God instruct that there will be a single sanctuary in the land (Deuteronomy 12:5), but it was sufficient to establish the role that Jerusalem has since played in Jewish and Christian history!³⁰

The claim that the prohibitions in Leviticus are strictly a ritual concern has been given attention. Many assume that the prohibitions against homosexuality are not given in the priestly/temple regulations but the Holiness Code in chapters 17-26 would suggest otherwise. Also the fact that the term “abomination” is used in other

²⁸ Ibid., 246.

²⁹ Ibid., 248.

³⁰ Lloyd R. Baily, Smith and Helwys Bible Commentary Leviticus-Numbers (Macon, GA: Smith & Helwys Publishing Inc., 2005), 249.

passages to show God's hatred for theft and murder (Jeremiah 7:9), cheating in economic transactions (Proverbs 20:10), and lying (Proverbs 12:22) weaken this argument. Finally, because God informed Israel that the inhabitants before them were driven out because of their sin, this is a command that applies only to male Jews who reside in the holy land—from being driven out of the land like the Canaanites. “God's primary goal was not to preserve the present inhabitants of the land of Israel from expulsion. Rather, the fundamental starting point in the H *holiness code* are prior to the concern for the land: obedience to the Deity who had the right to command (“I am the Lord thy God...”) and the desire to imitate God's holiness (“You shall be holy to me; for I the Lord am holy, and have separated you from among the peoples).”³¹

Verse 23 adds, “neither shalt thou lie with any beast”; such abominations were connected with the animal worship of the Egyptians. The stipulations against homosexuality were placed between the sin of prostituting children to Molech and bestiality;³² all three were considered vile sins in the eyes of God. This writer pauses to ponder how it can be said that Christians in some places are in revival or *encountering* God, when some denominations are ordaining individuals which practice a lifestyle that God detests. Surely there is cleansing in the Blood of Christ to make us *holy* in his claim for our lives, coupled with power enough to make the old lifestyle pass away, so that there will be a pursuit or *practice* of a *holy* lifestyle.

³¹ Ibid., 250.

³² George D. Voorhis, *Notes on the Pentateuch* (USA: 1994), 323. Concerning bestiality or zoophilism (sex with animals), it is stated, “Lying with animals was connected in Egypt with the worship of the goat; at Mendes especially, where women lay down before he-goats.

Leviticus 18:24-30 functions like the curse section of a covenant treaty. Because of the practices just described, God had programmed the extermination of the Canaanites. The land designed and consecrated for His people by God is here impersonated and represented as vomiting forth its present inhabitants, in consequence to their evil lifestyles that have been discussed. The iniquity of the Canaanites was now full (Genesis 15:16). The Israelites throughout this chapter are exhorted to a pure and *holy* life, on the ground that Yahweh, the *Holy* One is their God, and they are His people. If Israel stoops to the lifestyle of the people whom they drive out, they too will be driven out of the land. God is *holy* and His blessings are morally conditioned; the solemn phrase, “I am the Lord your God,” is the guarantee of that truth.

ETHICAL HOLINESS

Leviticus 19 is obviously intended to be a unit in itself; its subject is indicated in the command, “Ye shall be Holy” (verse 2). What the Levitical priesthood understood by holiness in daily living is indicated in this chapter. To the modern reader it might appear to be a collection of various commandments covering a variety of subjects, with little organization. However, it is a remarkable collection of sundry concerns that could be compared to Romans 12-13. A closer look at these passages reveals the similarities and the differences in the understanding of holy living in daily life from the old covenant point of view and from the new. Some of the most exalted Old Testament lines are found here.

The diversity of material found in this chapter reflects the differentiation of life itself. All of the aspects of human affairs are subject to God’s commandments. The

holiness of God is the bedrock supporting the practical holiness promoted by the laws. At times, the specific rationale behind some of these commands may not be clear to the modern interpreter (verse 19); the ethical commands of these scriptures are not arbitrary but are based on the just, humane, and sensitive treatment of the aged, the handicapped, the poor, the resident alien, the laborer, and others. These passages reach behind the outward behavior and the external to the inward motivation (verse 17-18). It should be noted that the basic principles of the Ten Commandments are incorporated into this chapter, but not always in the same order and not always with the same emphasis.³³

³³ John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck, The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old Testament (USA: Scripture Press Publications, 1985), 201.

FIGURE 3-2
COMPARISON OF THE COMMAMDMENTS

<u>Ten Commandments</u>	<u>Leviticus</u>
1-2	19:4
3	19:12
4	19:3b
5	19:3a
6	19:16b
7	19:29
8	19:11a
9	19:16a
<u>10</u>	<u>19:18</u>

It is no surprise that in a section emphasizing loyalty to God so strongly, a chapter should be given over to reminding the people of God's law. The chapter provides a rapid panoramic view of what it means to be holy. However, Leviticus 19 is more than merely a list of laws to be followed. It is an admonition to the people of God to live out the holiness of God as a natural part of their everyday lives. And the means by which they are to do this is love, "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thine soul, and with all thy might," (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). It was on this basis that Jesus explained the greatest teaching in the Kingdom of God (Matthew 22:37-39); "Jesus said unto

him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and prophets.” All of the teachings of the law can be summarized by these teachings. “One can say that the way to become holy is to keep the commandments, but the way to keep the commandments is by loving God and loving people.”³⁴

The collection of laws in chapter 19 develops several clear theological themes. The sum of them is *holiness*; this is the basic command of the chapter. There is a clear portrait of what *holiness* should look like: devout worship, honesty, integrity, justice, charity, and love. In this chapter of the law there is a double call for the covenant people to love other people. Their love for God was the inspiration for obedience to Him; the means by which they fulfilled their covenant duties to other people was also love—not a reference to emotions, but to actions. That is the same message of John, (see 1 John 3:14-18), loving not in tongue but in deed and truth. Holiness and love are the two motifs of Leviticus 19 and clearly for Christians in the New Testament.

The chapter indicates a present structure arranged around the repetition of certain phrases. This not only marks the major divisions but also divides the sections into paragraphs and helps organize the material. Sixteen paragraphs are marked by the phrase, “I am the Lord (your God),” which are divided into four groups of four:³⁵

³⁴ Allen P. Ross, Holiness to the Lord (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2002), 351.

³⁵ Ibid., 355-56.

1-2 I am the Lord your God

3 I am the Lord your God

4 I am the Lord your God

5-10 I am the Lord your God

11-12 I am the Lord

13-14 I am the Lord

15-16 I am the Lord

17-18 I am the Lord

19-25 I am the Lord your God³⁶

26-28 I am the Lord

29-30 I am the Lord

31 I am the Lord your God

32 I am the Lord

33-34 I am the Lord your God

35-36 I am the Lord your God

37 I am the Lord

³⁶ R. K. Harrison, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries-Leviticus (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 195. Some state the passages are arranged in three principal sections (2b-10, 11-18, and 19-37). Nevertheless this does no harm to the fact the stress is still on the phrase "I am the Lord (your God)."

There is no question that around every stipulation the Lord is reminding His people in whom the authority of the command is grounded, Yahweh! A careful interpretation of the contents of chapter 19 requires a focus on the timeless theological truths in the text so not to confuse laws and stipulations that would apply solely to Israel as a Nation, as opposed to the New Testament Church. There must also be a realization that there are fundamental truths that can be drawn out of these passages, even though they apply to the Nation of Israel. For example, the command not to kill reveals God's desire that life will be preserved, but Israel had stipulations as a nation how to deal with a murderer, which would not be the churches' responsibility for enforcing that law. In the New Testament the spirit of this law is extended, so that hatred is a part of this sin (1 John 3:15), identifying the spirit of the Law.

Many timeless truths are found in and behind many Old Testament scriptures and they are confirmed and applicable by the New Testament. Christ fulfilled the law so that we are no longer under it (Galatians 3:25) in the strictest sense. The law has its purpose, identified in the book of Galatians, but it does not imply that God's attitude toward lifestyles of evil has been altered, where He is no longer concerned about sinful habits or practices.

One of the most popular stories that Jesus told was the Good Samaritan,³⁷ illustrating "love thy neighbor as thyself," and yet it has its origin in Leviticus 19:18. Leviticus is one of the world's greatest ethical documents, even those who question the value of the rest of the book, see worth in chapter 19. As stated earlier it covers

³⁷ Luke 10:25-37.

every one of the Ten Commandments explicitly, except for the first, which is not far beneath the surface of the opening verses. The chapter range is wide, mixing major issues with minor ones, ritual issues with ethical ones, and theological issues with behavioral ones. Its random character is perhaps a deliberate jungle because life is like that—one item after another³⁸.

The previous chapter dealt with ethical issues to do with the family, the primary foundation of society. Leviticus 19 widens the scope and is concerned about how people should live to create a healthy society, a culture where the citizens are at ease with one another. The factors that create this are many, and the perspective that this chapter takes is that all people have responsibilities in the society to which they belong. Their actions and behavior either make it healthy or assist in its demise. The instructions given here are addressed to the entire assembly of Israel. “They are not the responsibility of the government, the leadership, or the priesthood, but of every member of the community.”³⁹

SOCIAL HOLINESS

Sociologists increasingly speak of the need for communal capital if a society is to function smoothly. If a society is to be prosperous, it must have more than financial capital and physical infrastructure; there must be quality relationships and secure systems that share a common set of values. A strong society will not be one where people are suspicious and distrustful of one another, or always dealing with crime. The foundation for a healthy society is one which individuals can be comfortable to

³⁸ J.A. Motyer, *The Message of Leviticus* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 232.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 233.

live in and its members enjoy sharing commons resources. “The fear of many today is that the social capital of all cultures of advanced individualism is disappearing fast. From one viewpoint Leviticus 19 is about how every member of a community can invest in its social capital.”⁴⁰

GOD IS HOLY

This is not the primary reason given in Leviticus 19. The primary reason arises because of the invitation from God to be holy as He is. It is comforting to realize the blessings that are brought to a society because of simply living according to the standards established in the Word of the Lord. “Holiness, explains John Hartley, is the quintessential quality of Yahweh. In the entire universe, he alone is intrinsically holy...that God is holy means that he is exalted, awesome in power, glorious in appearance, pure in character.”⁴¹ Yet in spite of all this He still reaches out to his people and calls for them to imitate His character. Israel’s life must be a reflection of the heart of the nature of God, thus what Jesus commanded when he said in Matthew 5:48, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Peter echoed these words when he stated in 1 Peter 1:15, 16, ‘But as he who has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.’ God’s desire for his people to be holy has never been revoked and still remains intact today.

In developing the concept of holiness in Leviticus 19 its meaning is spelled out in every day life in the precepts of the passages. “Developing the idea of holiness as order, not confusion, this list upholds rectitude and straight-dealing as holy, and

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ J.A. Motyer, The Message of Leviticus (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 233.

contraction and double-dealing as against holiness. Theft, lying, false witness, cheating in weights and measures, all kinds of dissembling such as speaking ill of the deaf (and presumably smiling to their face), hating your brother in your heart (while presumably speaking kindly to him), these are clearly contradictions between what seems and what is.”⁴²

Holiness is defined in the terms of moral integrity, which is in turn symbolized by physical wholeness. “Holiness is thus not so much an abstract or a mystic idea, as a regulative principle in the everyday lives of men and women.... Holiness is thus attained not by flight from the world, nor by monk-like renunciation of human relationships of family or station, but by the spirit in which we fulfill the obligations of life in its simplest and commonest details: in this way—by doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God—is everyday transfigured.”⁴³

Holiness was never meant as an abstract, otherworldly quality, remote from the real world. It was always a quality that could be related to everyday practical daily living and measured by what one could see in the world. Holiness was brought within the reach of every person within the community. Holy living involved goals, not so far out of reach that every one was perpetually condemned, but which could be obtained by the grace of God. Holiness was not an experience that could be refined in the interior dimensions of life by a few secluded individuals. No, it was a community affair, traced in the quality of one’s relationships and ethics within the context of the public. The daily practices of reaping in the fields, selling in the

⁴² G. J. Wenham, The New Commentary on the Old Testament-The Book of Leviticus (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1979), 265.

⁴³ G. J. Wenham, The New Commentary on the Old Testament-The Book of Leviticus (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1979), 265.

marketplace, talking in public or in private, even of cutting of one's hair, were vital areas when it came to living holiness.

VARIOUS COMMANDMENTS

Leviticus 19:3 reads, “Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my Sabbaths: I am the Lord your God.” Honoring the parents is an act of piety towards God, since the parents are substitutes for the heavenly Father as far as their children are concerned. “In Exodus 20:12 the father precedes the mother, and the verb is ‘honour’ (kabod) instead of ‘fear’ (yare) in this verse, however, a term which elsewhere is used of reverence for God. The meaning with respect to filial duty is clear.”⁴⁴ The scripture is clear; it does not matter the social, physical, or mental condition of one's parents. They are to always be treated with love and respect. This is one of the most important duties to humanity. *Holiness* in this chapter begins with one's home life, clarifying the significance of the importance of the family structure. It is out of it that all of society receives their values and respect for authority, as well as other people at large.

The honoring of the Sabbaths has been replaced by our first day of the week in our present Christian context (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1, John 20:1). The congregational environment gives the believer the opportunity to worship God in the company of others, and to contemplate the extent their life accords with the requirements of *holiness*. “The Sabbath provided tyranny of work and space for people to cultivate their relationship with God. A society addicted to commercial activity that never ceases from the endless task of creating wealth is an unhealthy one.

⁴⁴ R.K. Harrison, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries-Leviticus* (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 194.

Its riches in material terms will only be matched by its poverty in spiritual terms. Its citizens will be cogs in the industrial machine or bytes in the information network, but they will not be people who are fully alive.”⁴⁵ The message is clear: whatever day⁴⁶ one chooses to worship and renew their physical man, our Creator establishing the concept from the foundation of the earth and seeing both are essential parts of the faith and needful, there should at least be one day of rest and worship in the believer’s life.

In verse four God states, “Turn ye not to idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods...”The verb for the word *turn* in the Hebrew is used to denote apostasy. It can be used in many contexts; but it is used here as in other places in connection with alien deities (Deuteronomy 31:18, 20; Hosea 3:1).⁴⁷ The text uses an unusual word for idol (*elilim*), which may be connected to a Syriac word for “weak things,” translated here “worthless godlings.” The word is chosen here to demonstrate that the heathen gods are powerless and worthless. The New Testament confirms that idolatry in any form must be avoided in any form because it violates the New Covenant as well (1 John 5:21).⁴⁸ On a practical level anything that claims the devotion that belongs only to God has become an idol in our life—that can range from materialism to placing self above God.

In verses nine and ten, God commands his people to be mindful of the “poor and stranger” when they are reaping their fields and vineyards. This is one of the laws of the Torah intended to relieve the plight of the poor, widows, orphans, and the

⁴⁵ J.A. Motyer, *The Message of Leviticus* (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 236.

⁴⁶ 1Corinthians 14:5; Colossians 2:16; Genesis 2:3

⁴⁷ Phillip J. Budd, *The New Century Bible Commentary-Leviticus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 269.

⁴⁸ Allen P. Ross, *Holiness to the Lord* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2002), 358.

stranger. The landowner shall not endeavor to gather all the he possibly can from his fields, either by going back over his field or gathering that which is fallen. The same standard was set for those owners of vineyards; vines were not to be stripped or fallen grapes to be picked up. The poor and resident aliens have a limited income and during hard times, little hope of earning a good living. God desired that the landlords show gratitude for the harvest. He blessed them with by sharing some of the harvest with the unfortunate. God's commandment placed no added burden on the owner since he did not have to pay for the collection of the gleanings, yet at the same time the less fortunate maintained their dignity, since they labor for their goods instead of merely a handout. Also, at least two lessons are underlined in this passage. First, it undercuts the temptation of greed in the presence of plenty; secondly, it reflects the mercy that God has for those less fortunate. A generous landlord might leave some extra behind on purpose (Ruth 2:15-16). A similar law is stated in Deuteronomy 24:19-22 and is rooted in Israel's salvation history—God saved Israel when she was poor and a stranger.⁴⁹ The sense of community among the Israelites was such that the stranger and less fortunate were to be thought of as a fellow brother and sister and treated as such (Acts 4:34-35).

In verses 11 and 12 rules for good social relationships are stated. Stealing, false dealing, and lying are forbidden because they stand in opposition to the covenant ethic. Their very nature weakens the fabric of society and breeds suspicion, mistrust, and hatred. Christians in the New Testament are urged to avoid such evils as well

⁴⁹ John E. Hartley, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 314.

(Ephesians 4:28; Colossians 3:9). Swearing falsely in God's name profanes His name by associating it with some impure, immoral, or deceitful act.

God gives commandments in verses 13 and 14 that forbid the exploitation of fellow Israelites: "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither shalt rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with all night until the morning" (verse 13). The neighbor becomes the "hired" servant in Deuteronomy 24:14, but the concept is still the same. The wages must be paid at the proper rate and without any portion being withheld, thus "rob him." In Matthew 20:8, servants were hired by day, and because the poor would have immediate need of their pay, paid before nightfall. In the New Covenant Christian masters are exhorted to give their workers fair treatment (Colossians 4:1).

"Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block in front of the blind." Seeing that handicapped people tended to be exploited in the ancient Near East, God states they are to be treated with consideration (verse 14). Since Deuteronomy 27:18 also prohibited Israelites from placing obstacles in front of the blind or misleading them, it is apparent that this practice was not unknown among other nations. Since verses 11-12 deal with crooked dealings among equals, this passage instructs that the stronger is not to take advantage of the lesser; to do so is viewed as oppression and robbery. The stumbling block can be in a literal sense but it is used in a figurative sense also (Psalms 119:165; Isaiah 57:14; Jeremiah 6:21). The oath and the stumbling block include anything that might harm the handicapped person either for profit or for ill feeling. Business should never be carried on in a way that one who is stronger economically or physically takes advantage of the lesser. God looks after the

disadvantaged and deals with anyone who would take benefit of them (Deuteronomy 27:18). When society lives by the precepts of God, it produces a high regard for human life and encourages compassion for those who suffer a serious handicap.⁵⁰

In verse 15 God demands justice in the legal sense of the word. Judges must administer justice without regard of the status of those being judged. The prohibition not to favor the poor or the great guard against rendering unjust decisions, seeing those who judge a case are not immune to being affected by more than just the merits of the case. In rendering a decision, no favoritism should be shown to anyone, either small or great; this is also carried over in the New Testament in James 2:1, 9. Throughout the Old Testament God demonstrates His concern for the widow, the orphan, and the poor (Exodus 22:20-27; Deuteronomy 24:17-18; 27:19), but in this passage no one is to be favored. This demonstrates the fact that God desired for justice to be preserved, and not to be perverted.⁵¹ This principle of self-examination for judges was to be a code of behavior to apply to all Israelites in their relations with other members of the community in which they lived.

In relation to verse 15, verse 16 states, “Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale bearer among thy people: neither shall thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor: I am the Lord.” For the most part, professional lawyers administer justice in our society, but in Israel the judges would be the elders of the village.⁵² In the atmosphere of the local trial it would be particularly easy for neighbors to let their feuds and personal feelings distort the proceedings. A person shall not go up and

⁵⁰ John E. Hartley, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 315.

⁵¹ John E. Hartley, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 315.

⁵² G. J. Wenham, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament-The Book of Leviticus (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 268.

down as talebearer, literally “slanderer.” The basic meaning of the verb is to “go about from one place to another, traffic.”⁵³ The noun form of the word occurs in six references (Jeremiah 6:28; 9:3, 4; Ezekiel 22:9; Proverbs 11:13; 20:19) and is used to depict one who spitefully spreads untruth about another. It is usually accompanied with the Hebrew term “go” to emphasize the person who aggressively spreads gossip. Since people are known by their reputation, this type of evil destroys one’s influence and dishonors their reputation (James 4:11).

Neither may one “stand against,” that is, “act against the life,” or literally “stand on the blood” of a friend. “This idiom is variously interpreted. One view takes it to mean ‘to place in jeopardy’ a person’s life. Spreading a slanderous lie can put one’s life at risk, especially in a society, which the death penalty is prevalent. *Targum Oneqelos* and Ibn Ezra understand the idiom ‘not to stand over blood’ to mean ‘to conspire against’ (Levine, 127). Another view takes it to mean “to stand aside, neglect” another at a critical time, such as failing to testify in a person’s defense when one has evidence to clear a person in jeopardy.”⁵⁴ These humanitarian standards were by no means always observed in the Near Eastern society, not even among Israel.

HEART OF HOLINESS

Finally we are at the heart of the matter, loving thy neighbor, verse 18, 19; “Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart... but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” From mere outward actions and words, the spotlight turns inwards to the heart. When the scripture addresses the heart, it includes one’s mind as much as one’s emotions.

⁵³ John E. Hartley, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 316.

⁵⁴ John E. Hartley, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 316.

Holiness encompasses more than merely abstaining from wrong. Unless doing right is coupled with the right attitude and disposition, it can be legalistic rather than Godly. These verses forbid harboring of negative attitudes which likely can lead to taking revenge instead of dealing with disputes according to scripture.

First, do not hate your brother in your heart (Matthew 5:21; 1 John 2:9; 3:15). If your brother has done something to annoy you, the matter should be discussed with him; correct him as Abraham did with Abimelech (Genesis 21:25). It is more valuable to have things out in the open rather than brood over them. God instructs that the matter is to be discussed openly rather than behind his back, where anger could lead to resentment and in the end, hatred. Jesus instructs if a brother trespasses against you, “go and tell him his fault between thee and him....” (Matthew 18:15-22); Paul encourages Timothy to correct members with love and patience (1 Timothy 4:12). The responsibility of Israel’s emotions towards one another involves a positive heart and mind. Hatred is an emotional response that is reserved for only that which is evil (Amos 5:15).

The command to love one’s neighbor as oneself is noteworthy of comment, especially in days where feelings are the touch-stone of everything and a day when some use this passage to encourage self-love, citing before you can love others you must love yourself. Neither in this love nor the one that Jesus refers to in Matthew 22:49, when he affirms that all the law of God was founded on the two commands to love God and one’s neighbor as self, was a narcissistic self love encouraged. The phrase “as thyself” is a recognition of having self respect. “People naturally care for themselves and in general terms do not hate their own bodies. This command is

saying, granted this, others should be treated with the same respect and shown the same consideration as we instinctively apply to ourselves (and as we certainly want others to apply to us). Self-love is sin,”⁵⁵ (2 Timothy 3:2).

Gary Demarest writes, “Many contemporary expositions emphasize loving oneself as the first step towards loving your neighbor. However, this may result in self-love that never gets to loving others...a low self-image need not be a block to loving others and certainly is never an excuse for a failure to do so. As a matter of fact I am convinced that one of the best ways to deal with a negative self-image is to act intentionally in love towards someone else, no matter how one feels about oneself.”⁵⁶ This concept releases us from understanding as a legalistic, unconstructive spirit and sets us free to fulfill its generous and practical spirit. How different and productive our communities could be if every one lived by this simple yet demanding rule.

In verse 19 the Israelites are not allowed to mate different kinds of animals,⁵⁷ sow a field with different kinds of seeds, or develop textiles with different kinds of materials,⁵⁸ also in Deuteronomy 22:9-11. The Israelites learned from these rulings to

⁵⁵ J.A. Motyer, The Message of Leviticus (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 241.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 241.

⁵⁷ J.A. Motyer, The Message of Leviticus (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 242. Different animal species have an autonomy of their own, as have different families of seeds and different materials, and they should not arbitrarily be mixed together. The only reasons given for respecting these boundaries is that God has decreed that we should; any further reasonings is now lost to us. As explained in Leviticus 11, we still demonstrate an acute sense of boundaries and of things needing to be kept in their rightful place in our modern world. Caution should certainly be exercised in applying this command today, because it has been used to justify unacceptable and unbiblical racist behavior. Even so, such a decree should make us wary about rushing headlong into areas of genetic manipulation, where we mix genes from different species without knowing what consequences might result, or where we cross boundaries in, for example, techniques of human fertilization, purely on the basis that science had made it possible to do so without regard to wider ethical questions.

⁵⁸ R. K. Harrison, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries-Leviticus (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 199-200. The breeding of different kinds of cattle to enrich the bloodline and produce hybrid species was forbidden, even though selective mating was known and practiced among the Hebrews from the Middle Bronze Age (Genesis 30:37-40). Perhaps the reason for such a prohibition was the fear that the Israelites might imitate such abnormal sexual unions and ultimately indulge in the

keep separate what God had divided. These standards for Israel's daily life are not commanded in the New Testament any more than their dietary laws, or stipulations for purifying. Still, they reveal eternal truths. These principles for spiritual separation and purity in all manner of lifestyle emerge in the New Covenant to guide the believer in the way to live every day.⁵⁹ "C. Houtman says this law seeks to prevent the blurring of the variety of species that God created; in other words it seeks to preserve the diversity in the created world. Also these decrees contribute to the social consciousness that the holy is the pure and unadulterated."⁶⁰

Concerning these verses, Dr. Lee Roy Martin gives some perspective on the Jewish understanding and how they received some of the commandments of the word of God. This writer feels it adds some helpful insights to their concept of obedience:

I was reading a Jewish commentary. I found some fascinating quotations from Jewish writers. "The Torah Commentary Series". This is the Old Testament from a Jewish point-of-view. One of the quotations from the Mishna said there were three commandments that nobody could understand. One, why should a man have to marry his brother's widow? Secondly, why couldn't

orgiastic rites of Canaanite religion. Different kinds of seed could not be sown in the same piece of ground, perhaps because by adopting that method instead of rotating the crops the land would become impoverished more quickly. Garments made from two different types of materials readily produced static electricity in tropical climates, and are uncomfortable to wear. Some modern mixtures of wool or cotton with synthetic fibers sometimes provoke an allergic reaction in the wearer. Considerations of personal comfort appear to be in mind in this instance. Whatever explanations are adduced for these injunctions, it seems clear that the emphasis was upon maintaining a state of holiness to the Lord. When God began his work of creation, He separated light from darkness and dry land from ocean. Man can follow in God's footsteps by observing the same general principle of separation. The chosen people had been taken out of all the other nations to be God's special possession, and if they were to fulfill their destiny it was incumbent upon them to maintain their spiritual, moral, and social distinctiveness.

⁵⁹ Allen P. Ross, Holiness to the Lord (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2002), 362-63.

⁶⁰ John E. Hartley, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 318.

you make clothes out two different materials? Mixing wool and linen, for instance. The scripture said not do that. They couldn't understand why that was a commandment. Thirdly, why the ashes of the red heifer cleansed a man, but the man that touches them is unclean? The man who touches them is unclean, but the man he puts them on is clean. How can the ashes make you clean and unclean at the same time? They said, "we don't understand this, but God said it so, we're supposed to do it." By the time of later Jewish writings, they we're about as far removed as we are from the Mosaic culture. Their understanding of the commandments in some places is no better than ours. We have gained a lot of insight into the reasoning of some of these commandments even beyond what you would find in the rabbinic writings. These rules and laws of the book of Leviticus present a well developed perception of Gods' character and of God's "will for his people living in community, and a worshipping community."⁶¹

In Leviticus 19:26 certain pagan customs were forbidden to the holy congregation which included eating meat which still contained blood,⁶² as well as the practice of witchcraft known as divination or soothsaying. The surrounding nations made abundant use of magic in attempts to predict the future (Isaiah 2:6; Ezekiel 21:26). Israel was forbidden to employ such devices, because she was in a special relationship with God and He made His will known through the prophets, or

⁶¹ Lee Roy Martin, Pentecostal Explorations in the Old Testament: Leviticus In the Presence of the Holy One (Cleveland: 2004) Professor of Hebrew at The Church of God Theological Seminary, Cleveland, Tennessee.

⁶² J.A. Motyer, The Message of Leviticus (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 209. The reason given for not eating blood is because what it symbolizes. The statement is repeated in Leviticus 17:11, 14, the life of a creature is in the blood. The connection between life and blood seems obvious, the loss of blood leads to the loss of life—blood shed is life terminated. God has determined that it is by the means of shed blood that atonement should be made. It is not for humans to seek to make use of blood for other purposes or to appropriate it for themselves. It belongs to the Lord alone. John E. Hartley, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 320. In the worship of chthonic deities, the animal was sacrificed on the ground, rather than on an altar or stone, and the blood drained into a deep trench dug out near the place of sacrifice and allowed to soak in before the meat from the sacrificial animal was eaten (1 Samuel 14:31-34). This blood rite was to draw the spirits to the surface and to enhance their power of foretelling. Since the following prohibitions are in this context this interpretation has great weight.

indirectly through the priestly Urim and Thummim (Exodus 28:30). When God was silent the people were expected to walk by faith (Habakkuk 2:4) and live in accordance with God's general will declared in the law.⁶³

Divination is soundly denounced throughout the scripture because it is based on the conviction that there is an impersonal force, called fate, which determines the destiny of all things, including that of the gods. This mindset denies that God is all powerful. Such a mindset undermines the conviction that Yahweh is the supreme God, and sovereign Creator. Beside God there is no other force, save that of Satan, although it is lesser; so when some think they are opening themselves up to magic, in reality it is the force of evil, a concern expressed in the New Testament (Acts 15:20; 1 Corinthians 10:18-21).⁶⁴ Even under the New Covenant we are admonished to take care with our social activities, lest we open ourselves up to the influences of demons.

In Leviticus 19:27-28, the Lord forbids His people from disfiguring their bodies.⁶⁵ This is usually understood to be simply a prohibition of pagan mourning rites, but there is more to it than this. Mourning is not discouraged, only the customs which involved bodily disfigurement. This law conforms to other *holiness* rules which seek to uphold the natural order of creation and preserve it from corruption. God made man in His own image and when finished He pronounced that all creation was good

⁶³ G. J. Wenham, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament-The Book of Leviticus (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 272.

⁶⁴ In 1 Corinthians 10: 18-21, Paul states that eating meat sacrificed to idols might be innocent since the idol is really nothing in itself, but to eat such food as part of an idol feast in a pagan temple was quite another matter. Just as believers commune with Christ in the Lord's Supper and as Hebrew worshippers entered into fellowship with all that the altar represented when they offered sacrifices, so sharing food as part of a pagan festival involves fellowship with demons.

⁶⁵ John E. Hartley, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1992), 320. Hair is a sign of a person's vital force and beauty. The manner of dressing one's hair has strong cultural and religious overtones. Among some peoples, shaving or trimming the hair in a certain style may be a symbol of office; in other situations a sign of mourning (Deuteronomy 14:1; Jeremiah 16:6). Therefore regulations regarding the cutting of one's hair are germane to the Holiness Code.

(Genesis 1:31). Man is not to deface the divine likeness implanted in him by scarring his body, or the incising of patterns in the skin. The external appearance of the people should reflect their internal status as the chosen and holy people of God (Deuteronomy 14:1-2; Matthew 23:26; Romans 12:1). The body of the believer belongs to Jesus; therefore Paul states in similar fashion, “glorify God in your body” (1 Corinthians 6:20).⁶⁶

Leviticus 19:29 forbids any type of sacred prostitution, seeing that Temple prostitutes were a well-known feature of ancient religion. Indeed the Hebrews often call them “holy-girls.”⁶⁷ Yet here to dispel any lingering doubts about the nature of holiness God makes it clear that cult-functionaries profane a person, and also fill the land with wickedness. Individuals can be profaned by immoral behavior. The commandment of God is clear-- sexual relations are only to be undertaken within the sanctity of marriage, and under any other circumstances they become as unholy as the offenders themselves (Hebrews 13:4).

In verse 31, necromancy, which is the attempt to gain contact with the spirits of the deceased, is prohibited among the Israelites. The term for spirits, “obot,” also translated “ghost” or “spirits,”⁶⁸ refers to the woman (medium) who summoned up the spirits of the dead, usually by digging a pit and placing various offerings to entice

⁶⁶ G. J. Wenham, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament-The Book of Leviticus (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 272.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 272. Qadeshah “cult prostitute” Genesis 38: 21-22. G. Johannes Botterweck, Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament Volume 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing , 1988-89), 528. Qedesha, “consecrated one,” refers to male and female cult functionaries familiar from Canaanite cults, whence they were incorporated and imitated in syncretistic rituals in Israel.

⁶⁸ G. J. Wenham, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament-The Book of Leviticus (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 273. Some suggest that “obot” is a derogatory spelling of “abot” (fathers) and means “spirits of the ancestors” who live on in the underworld.

the spirit. This method is described in 1 Samuel 28:7, where King Saul visits the witch at Endor. The word translated “wizards” comes from a root word in Hebrew meaning to “know,” that is referring to the occult information which the practitioners of necromancy purported to have. Contact with such persons meant defilement to the Israelites because of demonic influences attending necromancy.

God’s people must conform to holiness by demonstrating kindness and justice to others (verses 32-34). The Israelites must be alert to maintain separation from all pagans and all pagan customs. To remind them that this did not allow them to take advantage of anyone, these verses call for the proper treatment of the aged and the foreigners. According to Isaiah 3:5, a society that fails to honor its elders is on the brink of destruction. The great command to love one’s neighbor as oneself is extended here to cover the alien or stranger. Almost identical phraseology is used in verse 18 when commenting about loving one’s neighbor. Visitors are not to be opposed in any fashion, since that would not exemplify God’s holiness. The Israelites must always remember that they were once strangers in the land of Egypt, and God’s power was the only reason they were delivered. The believer is encouraged to adopt a similar attitude towards strangers (Hebrews 13:2).

The Lord closes the chapter on a note of fairness and equality; these traits are important among the moral nature of God, and thus must also be important to the covenant nation, especially among legal and business decisions. Unfair trading practices were evidently common in antiquity, as they are today, but then they were compounded by the fact that there were no standard weights and measures. The

ephah and *hin* mentioned in verse 36 were estimated at about 4 gallons and 6 pints⁶⁹ respectively, although the exact quantities are not certain. God had blessed and liberated His people who were once enslaved, and provided an environment in which they could live and work without being opposed, but those blessings would continue only as long as they keep His commandment. Obedience to the divine will is the key to encountering the blessing in life. Allen Ross offers a summary of the chapter: “God’s people must conform to his holiness by keeping his commandment (the letter of the law), by dealing with others in love (the spirit of the law), by living according to his standards of separation in the world, and by demonstrating kindness and justice to others.”⁷⁰

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT HOLINESS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

It has been demonstrated, therefore, that encountering God’s presence in the book of Exodus resulted in a call to holiness, holiness that was exemplified by God’s claim to the ownership and the exclusive use of sundry men, places, items, and portions of time. Because of that claim the objects were pronounced as holy. Holiness was a result of encountering the Divine presence; apart from God’s presence or claim holiness is unobtainable. In Leviticus the result of that claim was seen in God calling His people to righteousness, or obedience to His commandments. These laws and concepts affected the Israelites’ daily lifestyle within the community. From this point the writer intends to explore the New Testament, in particular the book of Galatians, and demonstrate the positional and practical aspects of our covenant relationship with

⁶⁹ R.K. Harrison, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries-Leviticus* (Downer’s Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 203.

⁷⁰ Allen P. Ross, *Holiness to the Lord* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 2002), 365.

Jesus Christ and His Spirit. He will conclude a description of the lifestyles that will demonstrate that one has relationship with or has encountered the presence of God.

CHAPTER FOUR: GALATIANS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

In pursuing a book for focus in the New Testament which relates to the issues at hand, Galatians may be considered supreme due to its theological make-up. Universally Galatians is considered one of the four capital writings of the Apostle Paul (Romans, 1Corinthians, and 2 Corinthians being the other three).¹ Among the writings of Paul, the letter to the Galatians resembles Romans with so much affinity that according to J.B. Lightfoot, “The Epistle to Galatians stands in relation to the Roman letter, as the rough model to the finished statue; or rather if I may press the metaphor without misapprehension, it is the first study of a single figure, which is worked into a group in the latter writing.”²

There are two dominant themes found in Galatians which are given equal attention in Romans. The first theme deals with the insistence on justification before God by faith, apart from legal works. The second theme deals with the presentation of the Spirit as the principle of the new life in Christ which believers enjoy as the children of God. There are features in Romans which have no parallel in Galatians, but this can be said also of passages in Galatians which have no parallel in Romans, such as the autobiographical section in Galatians 1:11-2:14, in which Paul defends his

¹ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 1-2. Luther reckoned those NT documents which set forth the gospel plainly to be right certain capitol books—in particular, John and I John, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians and 1 Peter ‘teach all that it is necessary and blessed for you to know, even if you never see or hear any other book or any other doctrine’ (preface to German NT, 1522, WA, Die deutsche Bible 6.10). In the tradition of F.C Baur and his colleagues the destination for ‘capitol epistles’ is reserved for Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians and Romans, which ‘bear so incontestably the character of Pauline originality, that there is no conceivable ground for the assertion of critical doubts in their case’ (Baur, Paul, I, 246).

² Ibid. 2.

apostolic calling. Thus, Romans must not be made the standard by which Galatians is interpreted; Galatians must be studied in its own right.

Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians for three essential reasons: 1) to vindicate the gospel; 2) to defend his authority as an apostle (his enemies knowing that if they could undermine his calling, it would call into question his gospel); and 3) to defend himself from comparisons with Peter,³ with Paul being the lesser of the two in the eyes of the Judaizers.⁴ Paul wrote that Jesus' death on the cross is sufficient for salvation; the only factor needed is trust in the Savior. The Judaizers claimed the cross was not sufficient; one must observe the law. These Jews insisted for one to be fully saved, circumcision and the ceremonial law must be observed. This movement was a threat to the Gospel; Paul knew if his opponents succeeded, the very nature of the gospel (grace received by faith apart from the law) would be transformed.

When looking at the general tone of the Pauline theology found in the letter to the Galatians, French L. Arrington gives three concepts that express the heart of Paul's thought: unity, freedom and love.⁵ The emphasis of the Judaizers was the law; it was

³ French L. Arrington, "Galatians." Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002.

⁴ Paul wrote to the Galatians because troublemakers and 'agitators' had infiltrated their churches (1:7; 5:10-12). They were spreading heresy that threatened the very salvation of Paul's converts. These 'false brothers' (2:4) seem to be similar to the Jewish Christian Legalist found in Acts 11:1-3 and 15:1-3. Converted Pharisees claimed that in order for the Gentiles to be saved, they had to obey the Law of Moses and be circumcised (15:5). In Galatians, it appears that such persons argued that Paul had only half evangelized them and that the Law of Moses had to be added for them to be saved. So the heretics were seeking to compel the Gentiles to be circumcised (5:1) and observe Jewish ceremonial laws, such as religious holidays and purity regulations (2:1-14; 4:10). They were trying to substitute a system of works righteousness for the gospel of grace Paul preached. In short, they wanted to reinstate Judaism as the primary religious model for Gentile Christians. Gentiles had to become Jews to be part of God's people. For these reasons the trouble makers in Galatia are often referred to as Judaizers. William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 964.

⁵ French L. Arrington, "Galatians." Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002.

splitting the church because the law divided the Jew from the Gentile. The Jews had the law, and it set them apart from the Gentiles. In Jesus Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, bond or free, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 4:28). Unity in Him essentially transcends racial, social, and sexual barriers. The question arises, what really gives us unity? The answer in Galatians 3 is the Holy Spirit! The Spirit gives us unity, but the law divides. The spirit gives us unity and identity as the children of God.

There are two verses in Galatians (5:1 and 5:13) that can be seen as a summary of Paul's message. One of the central characteristics of the Christian life is freedom. What does Paul mean by the term "liberty"? To what is he referring when he uses the term "freedom"? "Not a freedom of speech, or choice, or self expression, absences of economic, social or political oppression; not the right to do as we please. Freedom is a divine gift grounded in the work of Jesus Christ."⁶ Each individual is under some kind of lordship. If it is not the Lordship of Christ, it is an unworthy lord. Paul recognized that believers have a temptation to come under the lordship of others and other things that are not the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Paul's freedom is not a possession but a reality in which we live—"the sphere of the Lordship of Christ".⁷ Arrington asks, "What is the mark of this kind of freedom?" The answer is love. Paul's freedom is exercised through love. He makes it clear that Christian freedom is to be exercised through love. What kind of love is he making reference to? Is it just a warm feeling? The love Paul is pointing to is the kind that

⁶ French L. Arrington, "Galatians." Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002.

⁷ Ibid. Another way to look at Paul's freedom is the freedom to live in service of God. If they do not live in service to God then they have given themselves over to their former masters, thus a slave to sin.

seeks the well-being of others, expressed in concrete ways on their behalf. This kind of love is modeled after the cross of Jesus Christ, and it is a cross of self-giving.

Since much of chapter 1 and a portion of chapter 2 are given to the defense of the apostle's calling,⁸ the writer will give attention to the portions which are germane to the issues relative to the project at hand. Therefore, focus will be given to chapter 2:16, select verses of chapter 3, and the portions of chapter 5 which deal with our Christian liberty and ethics. The purpose of the law of God encountered in the Old Testament will be discussed in relation to the grace and mercy of Jesus encountered in the New Testament. This writer will discuss how the "just shall live by faith" (3:11) and experience the faith that results in a holy life through living in the spirit (5:16).

JUSTIFICATION

In Galatians 2:16 Paul writes, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." In this verse, one of the most important in the epistle, the term "justified" appears for the first time. It is a legal term borrowed from the law courts meaning to, "declare righteous.....its opposite is

⁸ Ibid. The Judaizers strategy was to combine a personal attack along with a theological attack. They know they could undermine Paul's message if they could challenge his authority, seeing his apostleship and his gospel are bound together. If the apostleship failed, his message would. Paul vehemently reacted to the evil propaganda of the Judaizers and asserting his apostolic authority. Paul defends his apostolic independence, not in a spirit of personal indignation, but to establish the divine origin of his gospel. Jack W. Hayford, The Spirit-Filled Life Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 1770. Yet he also had to convince the Galatians that James, Peter, and John accepted his message and mission to the Gentiles 2:7-10. William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 965.

to condemn.”⁹ The word is from *dikaioo*; the cognate noun is *dikaiosune*, which means *righteousness*. “Thus the act of God in justifying a believing sinner consists of taking away his guilt and its penalty, since Christ bore both on the cross, and the imputation of a righteousness, even Christ Jesus Himself, in whom the believer stands not only guiltless and uncondemned for time and eternity, but also positively righteous in the sight of the eternal laws of God.”¹⁰ Paul makes it clear that this work cannot transpire by the “works of the law.”

In a negative sense Paul is asserting that no human being is justified by doing what the law demands. By doing what the law demands, or literally, “by the works of the law,” no one can be declared righteous before God or enjoy a status of being in a right relationship with God. The works of the laws do not make one acceptable to Him. What does Paul have in mind with reference to the “works of the law”? F.F. Bruce asserts Paul had no distinctive word or phrases for other particular aspects of law, hence, the necessity of deducing from the context the nuance which he has in mind. “Paul saw Christ as the fulfillment of law, when law means God’s revelation of himself and of his character and purpose, but as the condemnation and termination of any attempt to use the law to justify oneself. And it is this latter use of law which may conveniently be called (for short) legalism.”¹¹ Paul had no ready word or phrase in the Greek language to express what we mean by “legalism”; therefore, he had to

⁹ John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck, The Bible Knowledge Commentary New Testament (USA: Scripture Press Publications, 1983), 595.

¹⁰ Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest’s Word Studies: From the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, Publishing, 1978), 78.

¹¹ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 137.

use the term “law” or a phrase containing the term to express it; he used the term, “works of the law,” three times.¹²

James Dunn argues that to equate the term “law,” which is used here with the whole law, falsely represents Judaism as a works-righteousness religion.¹³ Dunn maintains the law in chapter 2:16 refers to those aspects of the law which promoted Jewish Nationalism and ethnic distinctiveness. This is a view that could clearly be concluded looking at the context of chapter 2, especially where Paul withstood Peter because he withdrew from the Gentiles when certain Jews arrived from Jerusalem.

Kenneth Wuest comments:

The word law here is used in its qualitative and legalistic sense. It denotes divine law looked upon as a purely legalistic system. It consists of statutes. If a person obeys the law, he secures thereby divine approval. If he disobeys it, he is subject to divine condemnation. The divine approval is a matter of debt which God owes and pays to the person who obeys. This is a salvation which a person merits, and which is given on the basis of works, not grace.¹⁴

¹² Ibid. 137.

¹³ James Dunn, *New Testament Theology: The Theology of Paul's Letters to the Galatians* (Cambridge: University Press, 1993), 76-77. What of the Law. Here we need simply to note that in Jewish theology the law was given not as a means to gain righteousness, but as a means of living righteously. First, the law was given in part of the covenant the God of Israel from slavery, God gave the law to show how life should be lived within the covenant, what he required of members of his covenant people. And second, the law was given to provide through its sacrificial system a means of atonement for sin. The suggestion, still often heard, that the law required perfect obedience and that nothing less would suffice, completely ignores the fact that the possibility of repentance and the provision of atonement have been prominent features of Jewish theology and practice from the first.

¹⁴ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies: From the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1978), 77. We must be careful to note that the Bible nowhere teaches this concept of divine law so far as a lost sinner is concerned, and with reference to his salvation from sin. This concept had its origin in the thought and practice of all man all down the ages since its inception in the heart of Cain. It was by faith that Abel's sacrifice was offered up to God as a better sacrifice than Cain Hebrews 11:4

The main purpose of Paul's statement is to point out that the law is totally inadequate as a means of justification.

While it seems that Paul has the law¹⁵ in its entirety in mind, he nowhere distinguishes between the ceremonial and moral law. It is worth noting that an implicit distinction is clearly suggested in 1 Corinthians 7:19¹⁶ by the contrast between the term "circumcision" and "keeping of the commandments of God," thus separating the "ethical from the ceremonial—the permanent from the temporal."¹⁷ We must remember that Paul never depreciates the law itself; rather he teaches in Romans 7:12, "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just and good." It is given by God and reflects the essential nature of its Creator.

Looking at the law from a legalistic perspective, meaning rules and regulations, one cannot earn a right relationship with God. Paul says no one is brought into a right relationship with God by keeping the law¹⁸ but only through faith. There is only one verdict when it comes to the law, guilt and condemnation. No one can keep the law completely. When one looks at justification and condemnation in terms of debt, if one struggles to keep the law, his attitude is that God owes him justification. The problem lies in the fact that in regard to the law one always comes up short and the

¹⁵ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 114. According to R. Boulton, the reason Paul makes no distinction between the cultic and ritual and the ethical requirements of the law is that, thinking in a Jewish manner, he evaluates them in regard to their content, but in their nature as demands.

¹⁶ Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. The NKJV adds, "is what really matters."

¹⁷ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 114.

¹⁸ Jack W. Hayford, The Spirit-Filled Life Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 1691. Romans 3: 19;23 teach that according to the law all mouths are stopped before God. The Jews had God's written laws in scripture, and the Gentiles had God's moral standards in their hearts and consciences, enough to cause them to seek him further. And yet no one will ever be able to reach God's standard of absolute moral perfection and be worthy of his glory on his own. Therefore, if there is to be any salvation, it must come in another way.

debt remains. In the end the individual places himself in the red by withholding perfect obedience. When one relies on the deeds of the law in the spirit of securing approval, in the end he or she is condemned. The law as a source of salvation never works. There is another way which it is offered.

On a positive note Paul adds, “but by the faith of Jesus Christ.” “Faith here refers to the acceptance of that which accredits itself as true, and a corresponding trust in the person concerning whom the facts are presented.”¹⁹ Faith is the instrument by which we lay hold upon Jesus Christ for justification. To avoid leaving the impression that this is another kind of works, note it is the means or channel by which we lay hold on Jesus Christ as Savior. Faith is the means by which we secure for ourselves salvation. It is how we lay hands on Jesus as our redeemer. Faith, through grace, takes it completely out of the sphere of works and puts it in trust. Arrington defines faith with three terms: knowledge, belief, and trust. Knowledge that Jesus died for my sins, belief that it is true, and trust which involves commitment of the human will.²⁰

Paul adds, “that we might be justified by the faith of Christ.” Warren Wiersbe defines this justification as, “the act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner righteous in Jesus Christ.”²¹ He emphasizes it as an act and not a process—not a

¹⁹ Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest's Word Studies: From the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1978), 77.

²⁰ French L. Arrington, “Galatians.” Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002. The human will enters into a daily trust. The kind of trust that Jesus refers to when he states in John 8:31, “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.” The kind that John refers to in 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” The kind of trust that is defined in Romans as, “the obedience of faith,” obedience is the fruit of saving faith.

²¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Free: Galatians. (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1984), 54. Dr. Wiersbe emphasizes Romans 4: 6-8 where Paul quotes Psalms 32:1-2. The sins are forgiven that is lifted away, covered and not imputed (literally erased from the record) so that the spirit of man is totally righteous in the sight of God.

result of a man's character or works because it is God that does the justifying. He distinguishes it from forgiveness in which a person could be forgiven, then commit another sin and become guilty again. Justification is more than a pardon in the strictest use of the word, seeing that a pardoned criminal has a past record, but the justified sinner no longer has a record of sin.

The word *justify* is a judicial term meaning "to acquit, to pronounce a verdict of acceptance." Imagine a courtroom of heaven where the guilty one stands before God the righteous Judge; but instead of a sentence of condemnation he receives a sentence of acquittal. Myer Pearlman describes justification as "an act of God's free grace wherein He pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone."²² Justification is mainly focused on the position of the sinner; once condemned, he is now acquitted; once under condemnation he is now blessed with Divine recommendation. It is more than pardon and removal of condemnation; justification is the act whereby God places the offender in the position of a righteous man. Some political figures can pardon a criminal, but they cannot reinstate the criminal in the position of one who has not broken the law. Someone who is pardoned is not considered a good person, yet when God justifies the sinner He blots out past sins and from that point on treats him as though he has never committed a sin. "The miracle of the Gospel is that God comes to the ungodly with a mercy which is righteous altogether, and enables them through

²² Myer Pearlman, Knowing the Doctrine of the Bible. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1981), 228.

faith, in spite of what they are, to enter into a new relationship with Himself in which goodness becomes possible to them.”²³

James L. Slay adds, “Justification has to do with man and his relation to God. The justified man is accepted by God and has been acquitted of all guilt. The justified man then is a regenerated man; otherwise he could never stand justified or righteous before God.”²⁴ To gain further insight he offers an example where the term is used in its classical sense. “In pagan Greece the *dikaio*s (righteous or justified) person is he who does not selfishly nor yet-forgettingly transgress the bounds fixed for him, and gives to everyone his own; yet he still desires what is his, and does not in the least withdraw the assertion of his own claim.”²⁵ The fundamental idea is that of a state or condition which conforms to order. A justified or righteous person stands in proper relation to God not because he is good or worthy. He is justified, or in harmony with God, because to him has been imputed the righteousness of God.

The Hebrew term for “to justify” is *tsadak*, meaning, “to declare judicially that one’s state is in harmony with the demands of the law (Exodus 23:7).”²⁶ John Calvin defined justification as “the acceptance with which God receives us into his favor as if we were righteous...this justification consists in the forgiveness of sins and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.”²⁷ One of the great confessional statements

²³ Ibid. 228.

²⁴ James L. Slay, *This We Believe*. (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 1963), 59.

²⁵ James L. Slay, *This We Believe*. (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 1963), 60. In the Biblical sense *dikaio*s is what is right, conformable to right, answering to the claims of usage. Thus *dikaio*s is synonymous with *agathos* (good), only that *dikaio*s is a conception of a relation and presupposes a norm, whereas the subject of *agathos* is its own norm.

²⁶ Donald N. Bowdle, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*. (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 1972), 75. The Greek term used in a classical sense for a wagon or a horse “fit” for its intended purpose, thus in the NT the meaning to effect an objective relation.

²⁷ Ibid., 76.

is, “justification is an act of God’s free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.”²⁸

The act of justification involves three particular provisions of God in Christ. First, it is the forgiveness of sins which equates to the acquittal of guilt and remission of penalty. All sin is an offense to the holiness of God and must be punished. Jesus Christ bore the punishment of our sins when He died on the cross (Isaiah 53: 5, 6; 1 Peter 2:24). God remits sin in the case of him who believes because of Jesus bearing humanities’ penalty of sin. Therefore, on these grounds, God has a just way to deal with the one who believes, remaining both just and the justifier (Romans 3:26).

Secondly, justification involves the restoration of divine favor with God. In Romans 5:1 Paul wrote, “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” This peace is the cessation of hostilities between God and man, the forging of that reconciliation requisite to an efficient claiming of the privileges of sonship.²⁹ Thirdly, justification is the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. Not only must our sins be pardoned, righteousness must be put on one’s account before he can experience fellowship. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, the apostle states, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Charles Hodge comments concerning the passage:

There is probably no other passage in the Scriptures in which the doctrine of justification is more concisely or clearly than in this. Our sins were imputed to Christ, and his righteousness is imputed to us.....Our sins were

²⁸ Ibid. Westminster Shorter Catechism, Article 33.

²⁹ Donald N. Bowdle, Redemption Accomplished and Applied. (Cleveland, TN: Pathway Press, 1972), 77.

the judicial grounds of the sufferings of Christ, so that they were a satisfaction of justice; and his righteousness is the judicial ground of our acceptance with God, so that our pardon is an act of justice. It is a justification; or, a declaration that justice is satisfied. We are set free by no mere act of sovereignty, but by the judicial decision of the infinitely just. As we, considered in ourselves, are just as undeserving and hell-deserving as ever, this justification is to us an act of infinite grace. The special consideration, therefore, by which the apostle enforces the exhortation, "Be ye reconciled to God" [verse 20], is that God can be just in the justification of sinners. There is nothing in the perfection of his character, nothing in the immutability of his law, nothing in the interests of his moral government that stands in the way of that stands in the way of our pardon. A full, complete, infinitely meritorious satisfaction has been made for our sins, and therefore we may come to God with the assurance of being accepted.³⁰

Although there is some debate about what "made his righteousness"³¹ implies, there is no question about the agency through which it occurs, namely faith. James

³⁰ Ibid. 78-79.

³¹ Albert Barnes, Barnes's Notes (Seattle, Washington 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM. Rom 4:3. The doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness has indeed been assailed by numerous objections. Generally, however, these originate in a misconception or misstatement of the doctrine itself. It is readily admitted that the righteousness of Christ cannot be made ours, in the same sense that it is his. It can never be ours in the sense of having actually accomplished it. Yet the doctrine, time after time, is represented as if it involved this absurd conclusion, and then gravely condemned. This is "to fight without an antagonist, and triumph without a victory." Nor does the doctrine involve any transference of moral character. "It never was the doctrine of the Reformation," says Professor Hedge, "or of the Lutheran and Calvinistic divines, that the imputation of righteousness affected the moral character of those concerned. It is true, whom God justifies he also sanctifies, but justification is not sanctification, and the imputation of righteousness is not the infusion of it." We may quarrel with the term "imputation," but will find it difficult to get quit of the thing that is intimated by it. When the righteousness of Christ is said to be imputed to us, the meaning is, that God so places it to our account, that in the eyes of law we are held righteous, and therefore treated accordingly. And what is there so unreasonable in all this? Were not our sins laid to the charge of Christ, when he who knew no sin was made sin for us? Is not Adam's sin imputed to his posterity? The fact that we do suffer on account of it, cannot be denied, even on the principles of those who deny imputed sin, and allow rally the transmission of depravity. For the question recurs, Why have we been visited with this impurity of nature, this disorganization both of physical and mental powers? Why this, antecedent to all personal transgression? One answer only can be given. It is the punishment of the first sin, which, as it was not personally ours, must have been imputed to us, unless we adopt the other side of the alternative and maintain that God can punish where there is no guilt.

Hernando proposes three options for 1 Corinthians 5:21: Christ became sin by taking on the form of fallen humanity (Philippians 2:7), by bearing our sins on the cross He became the object of God's wrath, and that by dying on the cross He became a sin offering, choosing the last as the best option. He cites the Old Testament's use of the term "sin offering," for which Paul seems to be referring to by the term "sin." The verb "made" implies that God appointed Christ to be the sin offering. The substitutionary nature of the Old Testament sin offering created a virtual identification between that offering and the sin that required it (Leviticus 4: 4-24).³² The purpose behind the sacrifice of the sinless Christ was so that we could become the "righteousness of God." This righteousness seems to refer to the righteousness that comes from God as a source. The righteousness of God is something the believer becomes; it is a righteousness found in Christ. "For Paul the righteousness of God in Christ included not only a right standing before God on the basis of faith (Rom.4:9; Gal 3:9), but also the provision to partake of the righteousness character of God himself."³³

FAITH

Faith in Jesus Christ includes not only believing the message about Jesus Christ but also trust in and commitment of oneself to Him. Faith not only passively receives; it also actively uses what God had bestowed. Through faith Christ dwells in the heart (Ephesians 3:17). Faith works by love (work of faith 1 Thessalonians 1:3); it is an

³² James Hernando, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 942. When the worshipper laid hands on the animal, it symbolized the transference of guilt from the worshipper to the sin offering and signified to the worshipper that God's judgment for sin had fallen on the animal. In exacting the death of the sin offering, God was in effect judging sin.

³³ James Hernando, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 942.

energetic principle as well as a receptive attitude. Faith is therefore a powerful motive to obedience and to every other good work. Faith involves the will and affects choices and actions, “whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23).

There is a scriptural relationship between faith and works. Faith is opposed to works only when by works we mean good deeds upon which a person depends for salvation (3:11). The epistle of James teaches a living faith will produce works (James 2:26), just as a tree produces fruit. Faith is justified and approved by works (James 2:18); faith is perfected in works (James 2:22); works are the result of faith, the test of faith, and the consummation of faith. Some have posed a contradiction between the teaching of Paul and that of James, Paul teaching justification by faith and James teaching justification by works (Galatians 2:16 and James 2:14-26). When one looks at the context of what issues they were confronting, one can quickly understand they were on the same side. Paul is commending a living faith which puts its trust in God alone, and James is denouncing a dead faith which is merely an intellectual acknowledgement. Paul is denouncing the dead works of the law (works without faith); James is commending living works which testify to its authenticity. When Paul speaks of justification, he is using the term in reference to the beginning of the Christian life. When it is used by James it is the context of a lifestyle of obedience and holiness, which is the outward evidence of genuine salvation. Paul is battling a spirit of legalism; James is combating a spirit of lasciviousness. “Paul and

James are not two soldiers opposed to each other; they are standing back to back facing enemies coming from opposite directions.”³⁴

Justification by faith removes two dangers: the pride of self righteousness and the fear that one is too weak to make the grade. The Judaizers had success in making the Galatians doubt their salvation. Their doctrine of grace (Christ plus the law) was beginning to supplant the gospel. The Judaizers thought that one would receive a more complete salvation and sanctification if they obeyed the law along with receiving Christ. Paul argued that there can only be one way of salvation, and that is faith in Jesus. The Judaizers claim to have the law on their side, especially looking to Moses the lawgiver. Paul went centuries farther back to Abraham, the Father of the Jewish people, and asked how he was justified.

Paul states in Galatians 3: 6, “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” Paul begins verse 6 with the term, *kathos*, which means, “just as” or “in the same manner.”³⁵ He is connecting what he said in the previous verses about how the Galatians had received the Spirit. The same way they had received the Spirit

(by faith), Abraham was justified, which was also by faith.³⁶ The infilling of the Spirit and being justified by faith are essentially connected. It could not be said that

³⁴ Myer Pearlman, Knowing the Doctrine of the Bible. (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1981), 241.

³⁵ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 991.

³⁶ French L. Arrington, “Galatians.” Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002. Genesis 15:6: And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness. Romans 4:3: For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. James 2: 23: And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God. God’s way of salvation has always been responsive trust in His word which in turn produces right living. The foundation of salvation is faith.

Abraham received the Spirit through faith, for he lived in the age of promise. The Galatians who lived in the day of fulfillment had received the Spirit as well as a righteous standing before God.

Paul clearly has an opposite view of Abraham than do the Judaizers. He also notes this difference in Romans 4: 9-25, where he examines the circumstances under which Abraham was reckoned this righteousness. “He argues that Abraham was declared righteous some fourteen years prior to being circumcised (Rom. 4:10; Gen. 17:10). And...Abraham was justified some 430 years before the giving of the law.”³⁷ Abraham was justified by faith when he was an uncircumcised Gentile sinner who had no relation to the Law of Moses.

According to the first-century Jewish interpretation of the Genesis 15:6, Abraham’s faith was a meritorious work. He “put his faith in God,” and God counted that act of faith for what it was— righteousness.³⁸ Paul interprets this to mean that he stood in a right relationship with God, simply by virtue of his faith in God. According the Genesis account, Abraham was called by God to leave his homeland (Mesopotamia) and journey by divine direction to another land where he and his descendants would receive unsurpassed blessings. In obedience to God he traveled to Canaan where he lived a nomadic life. At this time he was still childless, yet God promised him that his offspring would be more numerous than the stars in the sky.

³⁷ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 991. Paul acknowledges the Law being given 430 prior to him being circumcised in Galatians 3:17.

³⁸ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 135. Since Paul employs the quotation of Genesis 15:6 in confirmation of the implied answer to the question in vv 2, 5 (by “hearing with faith” and not by “works of the law”), it is clear that he does not take the “counting” as an accounting of Abraham’s merit, or even in the sense that Abraham’s faith was regarded or estimated by God as if it were righteousness (the one quality being taken for the other).

Even though it seemed impossible, Abraham believed this incredible promise because of the trustworthiness of God. “In itself, the statement of Gn. 15:6 could mean that Abraham’s faith was reckoned as meritorious by God and entered to his credit account.....Paul interprets the text so as to exclude merit.”³⁹ Paul makes a radical break with Judaism, while at the same time giving interpretation of the same verse being taught to the Galatians by the Judaizers. While faith does not intrinsically have the value of righteousness and is not itself righteousness, in the sense of something that we deserve because we believe, it is reasonable that faith (as distinct from some other quality) is reckoned for righteousness. As James Denney observed,

The spiritual attitude of a man, who is conscious that in himself he has no strength, and no hope of a future, and who nevertheless casts himself upon, and lives by, the word of God which assures him of a future, is the necessarily and eternally right attitude of all souls to God. He whose attitude it is, is at bottom right with God.⁴⁰

Abraham’s response was a complete surrender to God’s will and an acceptance of God’s promise, both adequate to answer any of his questions. It is in Genesis 15:6 that we see the word *believe* for the first time. “Basically, it means to be firmly established or rooted. In this context it means that Abram grounded himself in the integrity of God. In response, God accepted this act of faith as an act of righteousness...”⁴¹ Abraham believed, (meaning he literally believed in)⁴² the Lord.

³⁹ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 153.

⁴⁰ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 135.

⁴¹ George Herbert Livingston, Beacon Bible Commentary Genesis-Deuteronomy (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1969), 75.

⁴² John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck, The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old Testament (USA: Scripture Press Publications, 1985), 55. Genesis 15:6 provides an important note, but it does not

This fundamental truth is repeated three times in the New Testament (Romans 4:3; our present study Galatians 3:6; James 2:23) to demonstrate throughout the scriptures that righteousness is reckoned in return for faith. The Bible clearly teaches that throughout the ages imputed righteousness, or salvation, comes by faith.

The Hebrew term used in Genesis 15:6 for “counted” is *chashab* (kah-shahv). Its definition is “to think, reckon, put together, calculate, imagine, impute, make account; to lay one’s thoughts together, to form a judgment; to devise, to plan, to invent.” The verb is normally the equivalent of the English word “to think” but also contains a strong suggestion of “counting.”⁴³ *Chashab* is the consideration of a great number of elements, which results in a conclusion based on a wide overview or survey. “In this verse, God added up everything that Abraham’s belief meant to Him, and computing it all together, determined that it was equal to righteousness.”⁴⁴ It is the basis for the New Testament teaching that God’s way has always been responsive trust in His word, which then produces right living.

In Galatians 3:6 the term “believe” is in the dative in the Greek, which implies Abraham believed what God said to him, therefore being reckoned righteous. The term for “accounted” is *logizomai*. It was used in the papyri as a business term; some of the following are examples: “*put to one’s account*; let my revenues be placed on *deposit* at the store house; a single artabae being *reckoned* at 180 myriads of denari; I now give orders generally with regard to all payments actually made or *credited* to

pinpoint Abram’s conversion. That happened when he left Ur. The form of the Hebrew word for “believed” shows that his faith did not begin after the events recorded in this chapter. Abram’s faith is recorded here because it is foundational for making the covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant did not give Abram redemption; it was a covenant made with Abraham who had already believed and to whom righteousness had already been imputed.

⁴³ Jack W. Hayford, *The Spirit-Filled Life Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 26.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

the government.”⁴⁵ Thus Abraham believed in what God said to him, and his act of faith was placed to his account in value as righteousness. He believed God and his act of faith was credited to him for righteousness. French L. Arrington offers two examples of how *logizomai* was used in a secular sense and how it applies to this passage. The first is, “a person keeping a record of his debtors,” and we were all debtors to God in that we withheld perfect obedience from Him. When God accounted our records He blotted out all of that debt. Secondly, he pictures a king or ruler keeping a list of his “obedient” subjects and his “rebellious” subjects. We were on the list of the rebellious subjects, but because of our faith He put us on the list of obedient subjects.⁴⁶

Understanding this, however, does not imply that Abraham’s act of faith was looked upon as a meritorious action deserving a reward. It was not looked upon as a good work by God and therefore rewarded by the bestowal of righteousness. That would equal salvation by works. The fact is, Abraham cast off all dependence upon good works as a means of finding acceptance with God and accepted God’s way of giving salvation. “Abraham simply put himself in the place where a righteous God could offer him salvation upon the basis of justice satisfied, and in pure grace.”⁴⁷ It was Abraham’s act of faith which made it possible for Him to give him salvation.

The term “righteousness” in verse 6 is *dikaiosune* and comes from the same root word translated “justified” in Galatians 2: 16. As stated earlier, it means “what is

⁴⁵ Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest’s Word Studies: From the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing , 1978), 89.

⁴⁶ French L. Arrington, “Galatians.” Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002.

⁴⁷ Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest’s Word Studies: From the Greek New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing , 1978), 90.

right, conformable to right, answering to the claims of usage, custom, or right.”⁴⁸ The term is synonymous with the Greek term *dikaios*, interpreted as innocent, holy, just, meet or righteous.⁴⁹ Kenneth Wuest states the importance of the moral sense of the term and notes the difference between its usages in the profane (secular) sense and the biblical context. This is important because it helps us understand the term to a greater extent, seeing it goes beyond the secular, which has already been defined, and establishes that God’s righteousness is something that exceeds the secular understanding or requirements and demonstrates that it is an attribute only flowing from God.

Wuest writes:

Righteousness in the biblical sense is a condition of rightness the standard of which is God, which is according to the divine standard, which shows itself in behavior conformable to God, and has to do above all things with its relation to God, and with the walk before Him. It is, and it is called *dikaiosune theou* (righteousness of God) (Rom 3:21, 1:17), righteousness as it belongs to God, and is of value before Him, Godlike righteousness, see Ephesians 4:24; with this righteousness thus defined, the gospel (Rom. 1:17) comes into the world of nations which had been wont to measure by a different standard.⁵⁰

Romans 1:17 states, “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.” The righteousness of God is God’s way of justifying sinners, or putting them right with Himself without compromising His absolute moral purity. Paul is citing Habakkuk 2:4, which indicates that salvation

⁴⁸ Ibid., 90.

⁴⁹ James Strong, *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980).

⁵⁰ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies: From the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1978), 90.

by faith alone was clearly taught in the Old Testament. People were not saved by works or obedience to the law in the Old Testament any more than they are in the New Testament. Under the Old Covenant people put faith in the Messiah that was to come, and in the New, it is in the Messiah that has come.

In Habakkuk 2:4 the context was one of political persecution and oppression.⁵¹ The Jews were under foreign domination and were pleading to God for deliverance. The Masoretic⁵² text interprets this passage to state that the righteous Jew will be rewarded with life because of his loyalty to God. The Septuagint⁵³ reads that the righteous Jew will live because of my (God's) faithfulness. In the Qumran literature of Habakkuk 2:4, it is applied to "all the doers of the law in the house of Judah, whom God will save from the place of judgment because of their toil (*'amal*) and their faith in (or 'loyalty to') the Teacher of Righteousness."⁵⁴ Habakkuk 2:4 literally reads, "the righteous person in (or by) his faithfulness (firmness, consistency, belief, faith, steadfastness) shall live."⁵⁵

The element of faith, with the passing of time, became more closely associated with the individual's steadfastness than with God's. In Galatians 3:11, Paul states, "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for the just shall live by faith." The element that Paul picks up on is that being faithful to God in

⁵¹ Habakkuk 2:4 Behold the soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith. The evil and the arrogant Babylonians are contrasted with the righteous and trusting among God's people. The transient and unstable nature of one who attempts to find life in himself is compared to the dependability and reliability of one who trusts God for his life.

⁵² William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 993.

⁵³ Ibid. 993.

⁵⁴ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 153. The teacher of righteousness was not only a spiritual leader but a figure of eschatological significance.

⁵⁵ Jack W. Hayford, The Spirit-Filled Life Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 1342.

Christ will lead to righteousness or justification. “Paul is not emphasizing the ability to escape judgment because of personal righteousness. Rather, one receives the gift of righteousness by faith and hence is no longer subject to God’s judgment.”⁵⁶

These passages, Romans 1:17 and Hebrews 10:38,⁵⁷ are important passages for the doctrine of justification by faith. The question might be asked, “Is Paul fair to the passage in Habakkuk 2:4 or is he reading into it a different meaning?” It must be noted that in quoting from Habakkuk, Paul does not prove the doctrine of justification by faith; he only illustrates it. He had already, as addressed earlier, proven from Abraham’s life that the just shall live by faith. “This verse is nothing more than handy peg upon which to hang a spiritual truth abundantly clear elsewhere in scripture.”⁵⁸

What has been demonstrated thus far in the study of Galatians? Just as in the book of Exodus the holiness that is identified was God’s claim to the ownership and the exclusive use of sundry men, places, items, and portions of time, in Galatians our righteousness/justification (*dikaios* interpreted as innocent or holy) is found only in relationship to Jesus Christ. Outside of the claim of God, the touch of God, or the presence of God, holiness could not exist because God alone is the source of holiness.

⁵⁶ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 992.

⁵⁷ J Wesley Adams, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1361. Paul Quotes this same statement from Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11 to stress how a person becomes righteous, namely, by faith. The author Hebrews, however, quotes this Old Testament text in keeping with its contextual prophetic emphasis, namely, those who are righteous must go on living by faith. The one who perseveres in faith will receive the fulfillment of what God promises. The response of steadfast faith and loyal commitment to Jesus Christ will lead to life and the inheritance of what God has promised. Stated another way, those who perseveres in faith will gain their life, while those who shrink back will lose it and prove themselves reprobates.

⁵⁸ Alan Cole, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries: The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1978), 97.

Outside of the blood of Jesus Christ and a relationship with Him, justification and righteousness cannot be found. This holiness is and will be the result of an encounter with the presence of the living God both in the Old and New Testament.

The continuity between the Old and New Covenant is demonstrated in looking at how this process transpired in the Old Testament, namely by faith. Abraham was justified because of his faith in God, so also today it is only by faith in the life and death of Christ Jesus, that we are declared righteous before a holy God. Our salvation does not stand upon our obedience to the Law or commandments but only in relationship to God, namely through Jesus Christ. Just as the touch of God made holy in the Old Testament, we are saved, justified, sanctified (made holy) because the blood of Jesus has touched our hearts and claimed its loyalty.

In Leviticus this holiness became an ethical direction so that the term became like righteousness,⁵⁹ an obedience to or living out the commandments of God. The focus was on inner, moral righteousness, spelled out in terms of personal and social righteousness, or a daily practice of the result of being claimed by God and living the implications of that claim. Paul continues in Galatians, demonstrating the continuity between the Old and New Covenants. In a writing that is considered one of Paul's most passionate⁶⁰ letters wherein he writes to defend salvation by faith alone and not in the works of the law, the argument is made for the result of that salvation being exemplified by a lifestyle of obedience to the word of God. The end result of justification by faith will be a lifestyle of obedience. Just as Leviticus discusses the

⁵⁹ Walter Brueggemann, An Introduction to the Old Testament: The Canon and Christian Imagination (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 67.

⁶⁰ French L. Arrington, "Galatians." Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002.

social lifestyle of what is right/wrong, holy/unholy, Paul identifies the results of an encounter with Christ and how it affects our lifestyle.

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

Paul writes in Galatians 5:13, “For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use will result in life in the Spirit and will lead to a life of freedom.” There will be freedom from sin and its self-defeating consequences. The work of the Judaizers has threatened that freedom; however, Paul encourages the Christians to stand firm in that freedom. Although Christ had called them to a life of freedom, there were some who had misinterpreted this new-found freedom in Christ. Their line of thinking was if they were saved by grace then they could keep on sinning because God’s grace was abundant (Romans 6:1-4).⁶¹ If we are saved by grace apart from works of the law, they would ask, then why do good deeds at all? Yet to be free from the law does not imply that one can live lawlessly. Our Christian liberty must never be construed as a license to sin. Indeed, Paul commands the Galatians to never use their Christian liberty as grounds for self-indulgence.

When Paul says “use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh,” the term for occasion is *aphorme*, which is a noun. “It means a starting point or a base operation. The Galatians must not use their freedom in Christ as a launch pad for “the sinful nature”

⁶¹ Romans 6:1-4. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid? How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Paul’s teaching in Romans 5:20-21, that increased sinning brings increased grace was liable to distortion. Some might claim that if by sinning they were providing God an opportunity to display the greatness of His grace then they should sin more and more. The idea of a Christian continuing in sin is entirely contrary to the gospel. Sin is hateful and destructive, and those who have died to the love of sin and the ruling power of sin should never want to live in it any longer. Jack W. Hayford, The Spirit-Filled Life Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 1969.

(lit., "the flesh," *sarx*).⁶² What does Paul mean when he talks about *sarx*? It is used in a variety of contexts. Here are some examples: it is used as the enemy of the spirit in our present context of Galatians 5; it is used to refer to more than just a body, for in listing the works of the flesh, sins such as strife, jealousy and anger are also referred to; it is used to refer to a bodily physical condition in chapter 4:13; it is used in reference to humanity at large in Romans 3:20, as the opposite of a Christian (8:9), as being under the dominion of sin (7:14), as not having the ability to please God (8:8), and as hostile toward God (8:7). So in our context *sarx* is understood as, "the flesh, human nature as it has become through sin, what man has made himself, what he has allowed himself to become apart from God."⁶³ It is the nature of man which leads continually into sin; it is completely egocentric and has no concern for anyone but self.

Paul claims that the Christian life that has been freed from salvation by works or law (3:24-25) is a freedom that is sort of a type of slavery. The life of the Spirit is one that enslaves one to serve his neighbor in love (5:13). In the end divine love empowered by the Holy Spirit is the only rule or law the Galatians have to follow. A paradox is set forth in Galatians 5:14: "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." If one submits to the law of love, one will in fact fulfill the law. The whole law is summed up in one command: "Love thy neighbor as thyself" (Leviticus 19:18), a conclusion which was pointed out in the analysis of chapter 19 of Leviticus.

⁶² William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1009.

⁶³ French L. Arrington, "Galatians." Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002.

Although Paul makes no reference to Jesus, it seems he has His teaching in mind as illustrated in Matthew 22:37-40:⁶⁴

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all they soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and prophets.

Jesus and Paul both viewed Leviticus 19:18 as a summation of the Law.⁶⁵ Paul does not include the command that Jesus does to love God, perhaps because he is already addressing Christians who are aware of this teaching. Therefore they understood that a love for God was the basis for loving one's neighbor. The fulfillment of the law is not legalism. However, it is the expression of God's love for all humanity in sending Jesus and that as we receive Him we love one another. Legalism cannot produce this kind of love, church affiliation cannot produce it, nor ritualistic service, nor surface revival movements; it can only be reproduced as a result of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), which results from an encounter with God through Jesus Christ.

Be slaves of one another, Paul is saying, through love. He is referring not to a slavery that is compelled but one that is freed from self-concern by the work of Christ and gives itself in service. The love that Paul has in mind does not require us to perform heroic deeds. It is not strength in our own will. The life of freedom that Paul has in mind does not require us to perform heroic deeds but is a life of freedom made possible by the Holy Spirit. It says, *I am not left to my own resources, but I have*

⁶⁴ Jack W. Hayford, The Spirit-Filled Life Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 1448. The Pharisees' code of morality consisted of countless rules and regulations. Jesus summed up all moral obligations in the word love, expressed in the twofold direction of God and neighbor. The quotation in verse 37 is from the Jewish Shema (Deut. 6:4,5), which all Jews repeated twice a daily.

⁶⁵ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1009.

divine help— the Holy Spirit. The divine presence of the Holy Spirit produces the love that God has commanded, by walking in the Spirit. The power made available in Galatians 5:16, by walking in the Spirit, will result in not fulfilling the desires of the flesh,⁶⁶ which is a promise not a command.⁶⁷ Not fulfilling the desires of the flesh is a result of walking with the Spirit, a natural outflow of the life of the Spirit.

When we think of the body we think of the lower nature, and when we think of the spirit we think of a higher nature. These associations are not what Paul had in mind. What Paul has in mind is not two parts of human nature but two ways of life:⁶⁸ the flesh-life, the whole of human nature dominated by sin and that is broken away from God, and the Spirit-life, a life where the Holy Spirit enables us to live a life that pleases God, a life guided by the Spirit of God and therefore overcoming the works and appetites of the flesh. Two domains, two worlds. One is the flesh and the other is the spirit.

⁶⁶ French L. Arrington, “Galatians.” Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002.

⁶⁷ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 248-249. The course to be followed is indicated by the imperative, “walk in the Spirit,” where “in the Spirit” is imperative in the Greek given emphasis by its position before the verb. Walking is a common Hebraism for conducting ones life and is synonymous with “living.” If the verb is taken in the imperative here, the promise of the latter half of the verse will then be regarded as the inevitable result of life lived by the Spirit. What is implied is the flesh and the Spirit are diametrically opposed to each other. It is this opposition which explains why walking in the Spirit will result in the desires of the flesh not being carried out. It has been suggested that “Spirit and flesh” in this context are probably the constituent parts of every man so that spirit (*pneuma*) refers to the human spirit, not the Spirit of God. This is highly unlikely in view of the Spirit-flesh contrast Paul develops elsewhere (Romans 8:4-6,9,13), particularly in Galatians 3:3, and in the reference to the Divine Spirit in both the preceding and the following verses (5:16, 18,22,25).

⁶⁸ French L. Arrington, “Galatians.” Lecture presented at The Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland Tennessee on September, 2002.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE WORKS OF THE FLESH

In Galatians 5:19-21, the Apostle gives a list of the works of the flesh:

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery¹, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in the past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Fornication (*porneia*)² is a general word for unlawful and immoral sexual intercourse and relationships. “*Porneia* is prostitution, and *porne* is a prostitute. The likelihood is that these words are all connected with the verb *pernumi* which means to sell. Essentially *porneia* is the love which is bought and sold—which is not love at all.”³ The error of this lifestyle is that the person who is gratified with this type of love or sexuality is not actually considered a person but a thing. Biblical love is the total union of two personalities so that they become one flesh, each finding fulfillment in union with the other. “*Porneia* describes the relationship in which one of the parties can be purchased as an item is purchased, discarded as an item is discarded, and where there is neither union of, nor respect for, personality.”⁴ The significance of Paul beginning with this particular sin is its reflection of the sexual life of the Graeco-

¹ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 23. The list in the AV contains two sins which are not included in any of the lists in the modern translations from the RV onwards. At the beginning the AV has *moicheia*, adultery, and after envy it has murders, *phonoï*.

² Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary* (Seattle, Washington 2003) BibleSoft CD-ROM. Gal 5:19 [Adultery] *moicheia*. Illicit connection with a married person. This word is wanting in this place in the best MSS., versions, and fathers; the next term often comprehending both. [Fornication] *Porneia*. Illicit connection between single or unmarried persons; yet often signifying adultery also.

³ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 24-25.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 24-25.

Roman⁵ world during the New Testament era, which was one of lawlessness and confusion. The highest and the lowest of society were riddled with homosexuality⁶, a vice which Rome learned from Greece.

Paul sets his face against the sexual immorality of his day. He is appalled that the Corinthians are not disturbed at the situation in which a man is living with his father's wife (1 Corinthians 5:1). He calls for repentance of this sin, or the so-called Christian life is a mockery of true Christianity (2 Corinthians 12:21). The Christian must abstain from it (1 Thessalonians 4:3), shun it (1 Corinthians 6:18), and put it to death (Colossians 3:5). It is a sin which is identified as sinning against one's own body (1 Corinthians 6:18) which was made for God, not for immorality (6:13).

Uncleanness (*akatharsia*) is a term that was originally used in the physical world, then made its way into the ritual and ceremonial world, and in the current text, is used in a moral sense. Its definition varies: uncleanness, impurity, impurity of mind,

⁵ Ibid., 24-25. In Greece there had never been any shame in relationships before or outside marriage. Demosthenes writes as if it was the merest commonplace, as indeed it was: "We keep mistresses for pleasure, concubines for the day-to-day needs of the body, but we have wives in order to produce children legitimately and to have a trustworthy guardian of our homes." In the early days of Rome things had been very different and purity had been the rule. But in this the conquered had conquered the conquerors, and Rome earned to sin from Greece. When Greek Laxity invaded Rome, it was sadly coarsened. Hiberina, say Juvenal, will no more be satisfied with one man than she would be with one eye (Juvenal, Satires 6:55). Roman women, say Seneca, were married to be divorced, and were divorced to be married. Chastity is simply a proof of ugliness (Seneca, On Benefits 3.16.1-3). Innocence, says Seneca, is not rare, it is non-existent (On Anger 2.8).

⁶ Ibid. 26-27. J.J. Dollinger calls it "the great national disease of Greece" (J.J. Dollinger, *The Gentile and the Jew*, II, p.239). J.J. Chapman says that in Greece this degeneration was "not personal but racial", until "it had become indigenous and ingrown". He likens it to a loathsome fungus spreading steadily through a forest (J.J. Chapman, *Lucian, Plato and Greek Morals*, pp. 132, 133). In one of his dialogues Lucian makes Lycinus relate: "It were better not to need marriage, but to follow Plato and Socrates and to be content with the love of boys" (Lucian, *The Lapiths* 39). In another dialogue Lucian brings on the stage the figure representing Socrates. "I am a lover of boys," he says, "and wise in matters of love." What is your attitude of pretty boys he is asked? "Their kisses," he answers, "shall be the guerdon for the bravest after they have done some splendid reckless deed" (Lucian, *Philosophies for Sale* 15, 17). Plato's *Symposium* ranks as one of the great works of literature. Its subject is love, but it is homosexual love. Phaedrus begins the subject. "I know not," he says, "any greater blessing to a young man who is beginning life than a virtuous lover, or to the lover than a beloved boy" (Plato, *Symposium* 178 D).

vileness (Romans 1:24), unclean lives (2 Corinthians 12:21), foul desires (Ephesians 4:19), base motives (1 Thessalonians 2:3), indecency, as well as sexual immorality and dirty mindedness (Ephesians 5:3, Colossians 3:5). *Akatharsia* begins by meaning material dirt, “in the papyri, for instance, in a contract concerning the transfer of ownership of a house, the outgoing tenant undertakes to leave the house clean and free from all *akatharsia*.”⁷

The Greek Old Testament denotes ceremonial impurity more often than anything else. It is used of unclean beast in Leviticus 20:25 and of a woman in a menstrual condition in 18:19. The essential point about ceremonial uncleanness is that “when a person is in such a condition, he or she cannot approach God...enter the temple and cannot share in the worship of the people. To seek to do so is to incur the wrath of God (Lev. 22:3).”⁸ Thus in the ritual sense, uncleanness is that which makes it impossible for a person to come into the presence of God; it separates him/her from the Lord. It is used for the lewdness of a loose and immoral woman in Hosea 2:10 and in Micah 2:10 in reference to the moral uncleanness which destroys a nation. In the moral world, the idea is still the same concerning separation from God. Matthew 5:8 states “Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.” For the sinner who repents, God will always be found near, but for the one who glories in uncleanness, there will be a barrier between him and God.

Lasciviousness (*aselgeia*) is licentiousness, sensuality, indecency— a love of sin so reckless and so audacious that there is no longer any concern about how God feels of the actions or mankind for that matter. “As Lightfoot sees it, the essence of

⁷ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 29.

⁸ Ibid., 29.

aselgeia is that it has come to such a stage of sinning that it makes no attempt whatever to hide or cloak its sin; it is sin lost to shame.”⁹ In the New Testament it occurs in Romans 13:13 where it is said that the Christian cannot live in “chambering (debauchery) and wantonness (licentiousness)”; here the term is paired with debauchery and carries the idea of sexual sin. In 2 Corinthians 12:21 it appears within a trio of terms: “uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness, where again the reference is to sexual impurity.”

William Barclay offers this lengthy but comprehensive summary concerning the sin of lasciviousness:

It is wanton and undisciplined action. It is the action of a man who is at the mercy of his passions and his impulses and his emotions, and in whom the voice of calm reason has been silenced by the storms of self-will. It has respect neither for the persons nor the rights of anyone else. It is violent, insolent, abusive, audacious. Any thought and any sympathy for the feelings of others has ceased to exist. It is completely indifferent to public opinion and to public decency. A man may well begin to do a wrong thing in secret; at the beginning his one aim and desire may be to hide it from the eyes of men. He may love the wrong thing, and he may even be mastered by it, but he is still ashamed of it. But it is perfectly possible for him to come to a stage when he does openly and blatantly that which he did secretly and in concealment. He may come to a stage of sin when he is so lost to shame that he no longer cares what others see, and what they may say, or what they may think. The terrible thing about *aselgeia* is that it is the act of character which has lost that which ought to be its greatest defense—its self-respect, and its sense of shame.¹⁰

⁹ Ibid., 31.

¹⁰ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 32-33.

After dealing with sexual sins, Paul turns his attention to sins which are deviations from true religion. Idolatry (*eidololatreia*) is idol worship or the worship of false gods. Idolatry was common-place among many Gentiles as opposed to serving the true and living God. The fundamental error of idol worship is that it offers worship and reverence to something created instead of the Creator (Romans 1:25). Paul is clear in his writings that he regards idols, images of supposed gods (7:41), as powerless objects; yet he acknowledges that demons lurk behind them. He warns that to take part in pagan feasts is to become partners with demons (1 Corinthians 10:19-21).

“As sexual immorality was more often than not entailed in idolatry—witness the hundreds of sacred prostitutes in the temple of Aphrodite in Corinth, with whom the devotees of the love-goddess entered into sexual union as an act of worship (1 Cor. 6).”¹¹ Thus idolatry in this context is not only a sin against God but also against the person with whom one had sexual intercourse. In the broadest sense it is the worship of anything which takes the rightful place of God upon the throne of one’s heart. In Colossians 3:5 Paul speaks of ruthless greed and equates it to idolatry because the object of greed becomes the object of worship. An idol is basically a self-projection, literally the act of creating “god” in humanity’s own image (Exodus 20:4). “Idolatry is the fleshly desire to control the supernatural to gratify the lusts of the sinful nature.”¹²

¹¹ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 256.

¹² William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1012.

Witchcraft (*pharmakeia*) is a term that “originally meant the medical use of drugs; but it came to mean the abuse of drugs for poisoning instead of healing, finally taking on the sense of ‘witchcraft’ (AV) or ‘sorcery’ (RV).”¹³ In Acts 19:19 the practitioners of magic arts in Ephesus committed their books to the fire; the considerable value of those volumes bore eloquent witness to how popular such practices had become in the Apostolic age. In defining the works of the flesh, one finds that they are all perversions of something which in itself is good. Immorality is the perversion of sexuality, which in itself is something lovely and given by God. Idolatry is the perversion of worship, and witchcraft/sorcery is a perversion of the use of healing drugs in medicine. Next, Paul gives his attention to the works of the flesh that are the result of disease in personal relationships.

Hatred is translated *echthra*—“*echthros* is the normal Greek word for enemy, and *echthra* for enmity.” The word only occurs in two other passages in the New Testament. In Romans 8:7 Paul speaks of the carnal mind which is “at enmity” or hostile against God, and Ephesians 2:15-16 refers to it as a dividing wall that separates the Jew from the Gentile until they both become one in Jesus. William Barclay cites three examples of how enmity existed in the ancient world. There was enmity that existed between class and class within the same city of the same country. Secondly, enmity existed between the Greek and Barbarian,¹⁴ a racial bitterness. This spirit has produced racial riots and color distinctions as old as civilization, which

¹³ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 256.

¹⁴ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 31. The Greeks were arrogant in this distinction between themselves and the Barbarians, the Barbarian being a man who said “bar-bar” or a man who did not speak Greek. The test of the Greeks relegated highly civilized nations like the Egyptians, the Phoenicians, the Persians, the wealthy Lydians, to the rank of Barbarian.

forever stand condemned in the Christian faith. For Paul declares to the Galatians, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 3:28) Finally, there is enmity between man and man, which is the opposite of the love that a Christian is to exemplify. Christian love is an attitude which will never allow one to be bitter to any man and which will seek the highest good of others no matter what the attitude of others may be.

Variance (*eris*) is defined as a contentious temper, dissention, disputing, debate, quarrelling and contention. *Echtra* and *eris* are closely related. The former is a state and attitude of mind toward other people, the latter the outcome in life situations of that state of mind. It is referenced in Romans 1:29 as a characteristic of the pagan world. What is interesting about *eris* is that four out of the six times Paul uses the word, it is in connection with the life of the church (1 Corinthians 1:11; 3:3; 2 Corinthians 12:20; Philippians 1:15). In Philippians it is used in the context of those who are in competition with Paul. When the people of a church think more about parties, slogans, leaders, and personal issues than of Jesus, it is an opportunity for *eris* to invade the church. “No sin more commonly invades the Church than *eris*; none is more destructive of Christian fellowship; but *eris* cannot even gain an entry to the Church, if Christ be supreme there.”¹⁵

Emulations (*zelos*) is interpreted as jealousy, envy, or rivalry. It is used in the Septuagint in a good sense. In Isaiah 9:7 it is used as a characteristic of God in His establishing the future kingdom of Christ: “The zeal of the LORD of hosts will

¹⁵ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 44.

perform this.” *Zelos* is also a term in the Old Testament that refers to the holy jealousy of God. The prophet Ezekiel engages the term in his portrait of God as a jealous husband because Israel followed after other lovers (gods): “And I will judge thee, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy,” Ezekiel 16:38. The term is also used in a good sense in the reference to men who have a holy zeal for God. The Psalmist states, “Zeal for thy house has consumed me” (Psalm 69:9).

It is also used in a bad sense in the Old Testament. In Job 5:2 the scripture states, “For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one.” In Proverbs 6:34 the writer states that jealousy makes a man furious or drives him to rage. Paul uses the term no less than nine times in his writings; six of those are in a good sense;¹⁶ the other three are in the negative. In Romans 13:13 envy is something the church must rid itself of, “not in strife and envy.” In 1 Corinthians 3:3, the fact that jealousy and envy are still in their midst is proof they are still under the dominion of the lower nature. And when he returns to the church at Corinth, Paul is afraid that jealousy is one of the errors he will find in their church (2 Corinthians 12:20). Again the words of Barclay give powerful insight to this intriguing term:

Maybe it is true to say that there is no better test of a man than his reaction to the greatness and to the success of someone else. If it moves him to the *zelos* which is noble ambition to goodness, that is the work of the Spirit, but, if it moves him to a bitter and envious resentment, that is the work of the flesh, and what ought

¹⁶ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 46. The Jews have a zeal for God in Romans 10:2. Paul had a zeal for the law in Philippians 3:6. Paul speaks of the longing and the zeal of the Corinthians for himself in 2 Corinthians 7:7 and of the zeal which their repentance had produced in them in verse 11. He speaks of the zeal the Corinthians had for the poor in Jerusalem in their contributions to them in 2 Corinthians 9:2. And Finally in 2 Corinthians 11:2, Paul states that he is jealous for the Corinthians as it was he who betrothed them to Christ as a bride.

to be a spur to goodness has become a persuasion to sin.¹⁷

Wrath (*thumos*) is a term that denotes fits of rage, outburst of passion, bad temper, ill feeling, and furious rage. And like *zelos*, *thumos* can be used in a nobler as well as a less noble context. For Plato *thumos* is the “spirited element in the human soul, which needs to be directed by the rational element, much as a sheepdog requires to be directed by the shepherd.”¹⁸ *Thumos* “describes that unbridled anger that indiscriminately kills and maims any so unfortunate to be in its path.”¹⁹ In Romans 2: 8 it is used in the context of divine retribution, “but unto them that are contentious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath.”

Thumos can be a noble word. “It is the capacity of the soul whereby men love, whereby they have the power to command, whereby they thrill to freedom, whereby they are righteously indignant at the sight of wrong.”²⁰ Plato said, “No soul can stand against wrong without noble passion (*thumos*).”²¹ The Greeks derived it from the term, *thuein*,²² which means “to boil”; thus, it was like a fire in straw, quickly blazing up and then burning out in the same manner as it blazed up. Therefore, it is the blaze of temper which flares up into violent words and deeds, a bad temper in action. Adam Clarke defines it as “turbulent passions, disturbing the harmony of the mind, and producing domestic and civil broils and disquietudes.”²³ It is an attribute,

¹⁷ Ibid., 49.

¹⁸ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 248.

¹⁹ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1012.

²⁰ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 51.

²¹ Ibid., 51.

²² Ibid., 51.

²³ Adam Clarke, Adam Clarke's Commentary (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

explosive temper, which must be banished from the Christian life (Ephesians 4:31 and Colossians 3:8). Many people have claimed their explosive tempers are a part of their personality and expect others to accept it as a part of their life. The scriptures are clear, however, that it is a part of our lower nature. Some need to step back and take a good look at their attitudes and how fellowship can be destroyed through such outbursts, as well as how others are wounded by such actions. Paul is clear—the only way to live above this is through the Holy Spirit in one's heart.

Strife (*eritheia*) is translated as selfishness, selfish ambition, rivalry, base self-seeking, contention or a partisan spirit. The word is derived from *erithos*, a hireling, and originally meant working for pay; it came to acquire the sense of canvassing for office.²⁴ It denotes a mercenary spirit full of selfish ambition, and its similarity to *eris*²⁵ probably suggests the contention in which such a spirit could be nurtured. Paul uses the term four²⁶ times in his writings, and three out of the four times the context is dealing with divisions within the church body due to competing parties.

The verb *eritheusthai*²⁷ is working for hire; the motive would be bad enough when just applied to secular occupations—that one would only work for money not a sense

²⁴ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 258.

²⁵ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 49.

²⁶ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 54-55. In Romans 2:8 he speaks of those who are *ex eritheias*, those who are dominated by *eritheia* and who do not obey the truth, and he contrasts them with those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, and it is quite clear that it is not human glory and honor which are in question. In 2 Corinthians 12:20 he uses it of the sins which he fears to find in Corinth and joins it with quarrellings, jealousies, anger, slander, gossip, conceit and disorder. In Philippians 1:17 he uses it of those in whose proclamation of the gospel the main motive is competition with himself, those whose preaching is more to frustrate him than it is to exalt Christ. In Philippians 2:3 he urges the Philippians to do nothing from *eritheai* or conceit, but in humility to count others better than themselves and then there follows the great passage which tells how Jesus Christ emptied himself of his glory for men.

²⁷ Ibid., 55.

of vocation—but imagine what consequences such a motive would have in the church. There are those whose work for the church is only designed to exalt and promote their own ambitions. When those ambitions are not satisfied, bitterness and disappointment are the result where there should be sincerity and purity. There are those in the ecclesiastical structure who only endeavor to support a policy or a line because it is their own. The concern is more for a triumph than for the general welfare of the church. When Christ is removed from the center of the church and man makes his policy and ambitions the center, it is inevitable that strife, rivalry, and self-seeking ambitions will disturb the peace of the body of Christ.

Seditions (dichostasia) are defined as divisions, dissension, quarrels, and those who cause trouble. The term is used in Romans 16:17 where Paul warns the church to avoid those who create “divisions and offenses” in the body of Christ. “It literally means, ‘a standing apart,’ that is, a state in which all community, all fellowship, and all togetherness are gone.”²⁸ There are many types of divisions that exist for different reasons: personal division, class division, party division, racial division, theological division, and ecclesiastical division. Kagawa, a great Japanese Christian, was distressed at the lack of unity he witnessed within the church and stated, “I do not speak English very well, and sometimes when I say the word ‘denomination’ people think that I have said ‘damnation’—and to me they are the same thing.”²⁹ There is a serious challenge to look deep inside of oneself because of the tendency to confuse prejudices with principles and unreasonable stubbornness with devotion. It is perfectly common for a Christian to stand alone in the hour that we presently find

²⁸ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 56.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

ourselves, but one must soberly examine himself when he finds his actions/attitudes are separating him from the community of which he is apart. It is a grave responsibility to cause division in the church and a serious sin when it is practiced from the wrong motives.

Heresies (*haireisis*) are described as a party spirit, party intrigues, factions, and party quarrels. The fundamental idea in *haireseis* (plural) is “choice,” the act or result of the action denoted by *haireisthai* (“to choose”); a *haireisis* (singular) is simply a body of people who have chosen the same faith and way of life.”³⁰ The word originally contained no evil associations and simply referred to different types of religious and political parties. “Josephus used this word to describe religious sects such as the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Nazarenes.”³¹ With the passing of time, the word came to identify false teachers and their doctrines. The most significant usage of the word is in 1 Corinthians 11:19 where Paul corrects the wrong mindset the Corinthians have toward the love (*agape*) feasts³² and the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper itself.

³⁰ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 259.

³¹ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1024.

³² William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 59. In the ancient Church two things were combined; there was the Agape or Love feast and the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. The Love feast was a very beautiful part of the life of the early Church. It was a common meal to which Christians came together on the Lord’s Day. To see the picture correctly we have to remember that at this stage the Church had no buildings of its own, and that the Christian groups met in the rooms of ordinary houses. To this common meal everyone brought what he or she could, and it was shared in loving fellowship together. Very probably in many cases this would be the only decent meal that a slave ate in the course of the week. In Corinth, instead of sitting down as one, sharing united fellowship, the members of the group were divided into cliques and sections, or *haireseis* (the plural form of the word), and instead of sharing all they had in a common stock, each little group within the group kept to itself what it had brought, and the result was that some had far too little and some had far too much. What should have been one harmonious, sharing, and loving unity was broken up into self-contained, selfish, exclusive fragments. This is what Paul calls *haireisis*. It is the breaking up of the unity of the Church into cliques who shut their circle to all but their own number.

Envyings (*phthonos*) is translated as jealousies and a jealous spirit. *Phthonos*, singular of *phthonoi*, is closely associated to the term already discussed, *zelos*, or emulations. *Zelos* is used in both the positive and negative. However, *phthonos* has no noble ambition; it is only used in an ignoble sense of envy or jealousy. Stated simply, it is “envy which regards another person with ill-will because of what he or she has or is.”³³ Paul uses the term on two occasions. The first is found in Romans 1:9 where the Apostle is identifying the characteristics of the pagan world. It is also applied in the text of Philippians 1:15 to those whose preaching was only to spite Paul as opposed to winning converts to the Cross: “Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will.” Barclay rightly states, “*phthonos* was always an ugly word.”³⁴ It is a mean-spirited disposition that resents the good fortune of others. Paul moves on to sins of intemperance.

Drunkenness (*methe*) is defined as drinking bouts or hard drinking. This was a hedonistic lifestyle which existed among the pagans of that day. While the use of wine is in itself not a sin, (for 1 Timothy 5:23 states, “Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities”) drunkenness is viewed in a different light. *Methai*, the plural, is used in several passages as it refers to vices of which we should be free. Romans 13:13 states, “Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness...,” 1 Corinthians 5:11 states, “But now I

³³ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 259.

³⁴ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 48-49. *Phthonos* does not occur in the canonical OT at all. It does occur in the Apocrypha. ‘Through the devil’s envy death came into the world, and those who belong to his party experience it’ (Wisd. 2.24). Envy is a devilish thing. ‘Neither will I travel in the company of sickly envy, for envy does not associate with wisdom’ (Wisd. 6.23). In I Maccabees the historian says of the Romans: ‘They trust one man each year to rule over them and to control all their land. They all heed this one man, and there is no envy or jealousy among them’ (Macc. 8.16). *Phthonos* is clearly a hateful thing.

have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard....” and in 6:10 Paul tells the Corinthian church that no one who is a “drunkard,” shall inherit the kingdom of God. In 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7, Paul identifies drunkenness as a nocturnal activity and as a quality opposite of Christian sober mindedness. A man given to strong drink is disqualified from the office of Bishop or a deacon in the Church (1 Timothy 3:3, 8; Titus 1:7). Drunkenness leads to debauchery, but the Christian life should be characterized by being filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). Ronald Fung wisely states, “Between drunkenness and gluttony, the latter is the more perilous because it weakens people’s rational and moral control over their words and actions; thus it is suggestive that in 1 Cor. 5:11; 6:10 the drunkard is neighbor to the slanderer and the swindler.”³⁵

Revellings (*komos*) is defined as carousings, orgies, riotous feasting, or even disorderly dancing. In classical Greek the word does not have a bad reputation but is used for a “joyful procession and banquet held in honor of a citizen who had distinguished himself, as in a victory in the games.”³⁶ F.F. Bruce asserts that “the closing stages of such a celebration however, might well be attended by insobriety that would invite moral censure.”³⁷ The word *revels* or *revelry* occurs three times in the New Testament and is always used in conjunction or association with drunkenness. It is used in our current context as well as Romans 13:13 where Paul admonishes, “Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not

³⁵ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 259-60.

³⁶ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 250.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 250.

in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.” Finally it is used in 1 Peter 4:3 as it is associated with “excess of wine” which implies drunkenness.

It is used in the Apocrypha; one significant use of the word is found in 2 Maccabees 6:4. The passage is a description of Antiochus Epiphanes as he invaded Jerusalem in the early part of the 2nd century BC and made a deliberate attempt to wipe out the Jewish faith. He defiled the great altar of the burnt offering by offering pig’s flesh on it and turned the rooms in the temple court into public brothels. It reads, “For the heathen filled the temple with profligacy and revelry, amusing themselves with prostitutes and lying with women within the sacred precincts, and bringing into it things that were forbidden.”³⁸ “*Komos* expresses a lustful excess in physical and sexual pleasure which is offensive to God and to man alike. It may well be that the best translation of it is that of J. W. C. Wand, when he translates it “debauchery.”³⁹ There is a way for Christians to avoid such pleasure; it is to remember that they are *claimed* of God in Christ Jesus and therefore forever in his presence; Christians should be living life in work and pleasure so that it is fit for God to see.

Paul says that not only are the works of the flesh obvious, but that when a person lives by the flesh, those fleshly works can become a way of life. In Galatians 5:21 the proclamation, “that they which do such things,” can be better understood when it is rendered, “those who practice such things (NASB); the participle *prassontes* denotes

³⁸ Edgar J. Goodspeed, The Apocrypha: An American Translation (New York: Random House, 1959), 461.

³⁹ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 62.

not an occasional lapse but habitual behavior.”⁴⁰ So the apostle is not addressing someone who stumbles or slips and desires forgiveness (thank God that the mercy of God is always available for those who acknowledge their sin). What Paul has in mind are those who have deceived themselves into believing it is acceptable before God if they live in this state on a continual basis.

The Apostle continues with a warning in verse 21: “that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” The general view of the gospels is that the “kingdom of God”⁴¹ was in the process of being inaugurated during Jesus’ earthly ministry and fully inaugurated at his death and resurrection. This kingdom of God⁴² is essentially the same as the kingdom of Jesus Christ, as noted in Colossians 1:13, which states, “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated

⁴⁰ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 261.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 261.

⁴² Jack W. Hayford, The Spirit-Filled Life Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 1407; 1442. The New Testament records 137 references to “the kingdom,” and over 100 of these are during Jesus’ ministry, as His entire teaching and approach as Messiah—the Savior-King—center on this theme. The term refers to God’s sovereign rule in the universe—He is the King of the heavens (Genesis 1:1). In the Gospels it refers to the entry of God’s long anticipated Anointed One—the prophesied Messiah, the promised Son of David, who would not only be the Savior, Deliverer, and King of Israel, but of all mankind. In Matthew 3:2 John declares that the rule of God’s King was about to overthrow the power and rule of all evil—both human and hellish. The kingdom was near because the King was here. And His presence, introducing the power of the kingdom of God meant a new world of potential hope to mankind. Man would no more need to be held hostage to either the rule of death over mankind, resultant from human sin and sinning, or to the deadening rule of oppressive human systems. The kingdom of darkness would be confronted and the death, deprivation, disease, and destruction levied by satanic power would begin to be overthrown. As God’s King, Jesus offers the blessing of God’s rule, now available to bring life to every human experience, as well as deliverance from the dominance of either flesh or the Devil. In Matthew 19:23-24 Jesus’ uses the terms “kingdom of heaven,” and “kingdom of God” interchangeable. In doing so, it sufficiently demonstrates that the two terms are meant to refer to one and the same thing: the kingdom. Although some make a labored distinction between them, this text demonstrates that the “kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God” are verifiably synonyms. Matthew is the only New Testament writer who used the term “kingdom of heaven.” Doing so, he showed a sensitivity toward his originally intended audience of Jewish readers, for whom too frequent use of the name of “God” would have seemed to irreverent. By a variety of terms Matthew refers to “the kingdom” 50 times in his Gospel: 32 times as the “kingdom of heaven”; 5 time as the “kingdom of God”; 4 times as the “Father’s” kingdom; 2 times as the kingdom of the “Son of Man”; with the remaining 7 references to simply “the kingdom.” This variety of usage shows these terms to be synonyms for the kingdom.

us into the kingdom of his dear Son.” Sometimes it is even rendered the “kingdom of Christ and God” (Ephesians 5:5) or “the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ” (Revelation 11:15). “The kingdom of God for Paul lies in the future: it is the heritage of the people of God in the age to come, the resurrection age. The gift of the Spirit here and now is the first installment (Rom. 8:23) and the guarantee (2 Cor. 1:22) of that coming heritage.”⁴³

Since God has a kingdom and Christ is the King, the children of the kingdom inherit it. For it is by Christ’s redeeming act of grace and our union to him that we have been made to become the true offspring of Abraham (Galatians 3:7-9; 26-29), and therefore God’s children according to the promise. This kingdom of God and its reign, however, is moral in nature, and those who constantly live in ways that are opposed to the nature of God (1 Corinthians 6:9) demonstrate that they have not accepted God’s rule through His Son in their lives. Since they are not a part of the present phase of the kingdom, they will not have a part in its future blessings because the two phases are joined together (Ephesians 5:5). F. F. Bruce concurs: “While good deeds in themselves do not admit one to the kingdom, evil deeds of the type mentioned certainly exclude one.”⁴⁴ Paul and Barnabas admonish in Acts 14:22, “that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” In Paul’s own way this is a reminder again that the kingdom of God is not without a price. “The gospel which offers justification and freedom from the law through faith in

⁴³ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 251.

⁴⁴ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 250.

Christ never gives the believer any liberty to turn that liberty into license, to practice the acts of the sinful nature.”⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 262.

CHAPTER SIX: THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Paul goes on to contrast the fruit (harvest) of the Spirit with the works of the sinful nature, for just as the sinful nature manifests itself in different ways, so also the fruit of the Spirit is evident when in operation in the believer's life. The term for fruit (*karpos*) is in the singular,¹ and its use demonstrates the unity involved in the Spirit of God. Also it emphasizes the truth that the Spirit-filled believer will demonstrate all the characteristics and not one or another— “the singular harvest shows that the nine graces mentioned are not, so to say, different jewels; rather, they are different facets of the same jewel which cohere and show forth their luster simultaneously.”² Jesus said in Matthew 7:16-20:

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit: but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

There are many who pretend to be Christian teachers, but whose real purposes are selfish and destructive. There must be a test of their fruit, a test of their lifestyle, character, teaching, and influence, to see if they have had a true encounter with God or if they are false. God does not want us to have a condemning attitude towards

¹ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1013.

² Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 262.

others, but he has empowered true believers to test the “fruit” and see if it measures up.

The terminology used by the apostle is demonstrative of his source of this fruit or harvest which is at work in the Spirit-filled believer’s life. The source is not the believer, nor some result of a strenuous observance of an external legal code, but the natural outflow of a life transformed and empowered by the Spirit as opposed to a self-centered life. It is important also to note that the virtues are characterized as “fruit” as opposed to “works.” These qualities cannot be produced by any form of human effort; they can only be produced by a relationship (*encounter*) with the Spirit of God. Just as in the Old Testament nothing could be *holy* but that which was *claimed* by God and subsequently in His continual service, so also we cannot of our own efforts produce a lifestyle that is only possible by the direct result of His presence. The source is God, His *Holy* Spirit, and His *Holy* Touch. Paul declares in Galatians 5: 22-23:

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against there is no such law. And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

Jesus gave such a beautiful analogy in the Gospel of John of the heavenly vinedresser, using it to remind the disciples of the need of di-“vine” discipline and the importance of maintaining an abiding union with him—it is worthy of repeating at this point. In John 15: 1-5 Jesus so tenderly reminds his disciples:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it,

that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you, As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

It is only fitting that the Apostle begins with love (*agape*)³ because it stands at the head of the lists of virtues— for God is love (1 John 4:8). In 1 Corinthians 13:13 he states, “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity” (*agape*). This is the Spirit-empowered love that unerringly seeks the welfare of others. In this sense *agape* could be considered the source of all the graces of the Spirit. In Colossians 3:14 love is the bond of perfection which holds everything together in perfect harmony. In Romans 13:10 we are told, “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore, love is fulfilling the law.” Therefore, love in itself is fulfilling the law.

What is one way to determine the meaning of this term? One is the way in which Jesus himself spoke of the love of God in the Gospel of Matthew 5:43-48.⁴ The Old Testament concept of love is found in the book of Leviticus 19:18, which has already been discussed. Notice how Jesus states, “Ye have heard that it hath been said.” He does not say “it is written” because the concept of hating one’s enemies was added

³ Interlinear Bible: New Testament (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

⁴ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you: That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

later by the Pharisees.⁵ He insisted that our love for one another must be patterned after the love of God. The great characteristic of love is defined in these verses, in that God sends rain and sun on both good and evil people. This love is a spirit in the heart which will never seek anything but the highest good for one another. “It does not matter how its fellow-men treat it; it does not matter what and who its fellow-men are; it does anything no matter what their attitude is to it, it will never seek anything but their highest and their best good.”⁶

In the Greek there are several words used to define the term “love.” There is *eros*.⁷ This is a term used to define loving between the sexes, a love of a man for a woman; it is always characterized by physical attraction or sexual love. There is the word *philia* which is the highest word in the Greek for love. It describes a tender relationship of the body mind and spirit. “It includes the physical side of love, for the verb *philein* can mean “to kiss” or “to caress,” but it includes very much more...it is true that *philia* describes the highest kind of human love, but it is also true that the light of *philia* can flicker and its warmth grow cold.”⁸ Then there is the term *storge*; it is a term used to refer to family love. Vincent comments concerning *storge*: “It has a distinct moral significance, and is not applied to base inclinations opposed to a genuine manly nature. It is the word for love to parents, wife, children, king or country, as one's own.”⁹

When looking at the term *agape* one must consider that outside of the New Testament it rarely occurs in the Greek manuscripts of that period. It is a word to

⁵ Jack W. Hayford, *The Spirit-Filled Life Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 1413.

⁶ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 65.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁹ Marvin R. Vincent, *Vincent's New Testament Word Studies* (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

which Christianity gave a new meaning. “*Agape* denotes an undefeatable benevolence and unconquerable goodwill that always seeks the highest good of other person, no matter what he does. It is the self-giving love that gives freely without asking anything in return.”¹⁰ It is unlike *phileos* in that it is not a love of chance. It refers to the will rather than emotion and does not consider the worth of its object. This is why it is engaged to describe God’s love for all of humanity.

Everything begins with the love of God, for God is a God of love. Christian love is a reflection of that love; it is from God’s love that it draws its power. The whole process of salvation begins with the love of God toward humanity. Jesus’ death on the cross did not change the mind of God toward the sins of humanity. It is not as though after Jesus’ death on the cross, God’s attitude was altered toward men. It all started because God so loved the world he gave his only begotten Son. It was God who initiated this love relationship with humanity while we were still his enemies (Romans 5:8) and Jesus who gave his life for us while we were undeserving. This *claim* all started with God taking the initiative. “God’s love is a productive and transforming love. It is that love of God which, poured into men’s hearts, produces the great qualities of Christian life and character (Romans 5:3-5).”¹¹

Since love is a chief virtue, the greatest of all attributes, the fountainhead of all Christian qualities, let us look at a few areas on how it should work in the life of the believer. It should be the atmosphere of the Christian life. The Apostle Paul says, we should “walk in love” in Ephesians 5:2. It should be the motive by which we do all things. In the Sermon on the Mount there is no doubt that the motives of the heart are

¹⁰ Jack W. Hayford, The Spirit-Filled Life Bible (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 1694.

¹¹ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 69.

of the greatest importance in the Kingdom of God (Matthew 5:21-48). Paul therefore informs the church at Corinth to do everything in love (1 Corinthians 16:14). There can be evil motives in our hearts like pride, selfish ambition, or other impure desires which have been covered under the works of the flesh. We must guard our hearts against these elements. William Barclay says, “One of the great neglected duties of the Christian life is self-examination, and maybe self-examination is neglected because it is so humiliating an exercise.”¹² Martin Luther extends the challenge to look into one’s heart to see if indeed Christ’s love abides when he sheds his insight concerning *agape*:

Love for one’s neighbor proves itself when the neighbor offends and seems to deserve hatred. Otherwise almost no virtue is more open to imitation; so much so that in Rom. 12.9 this is the one thing the apostle is concerned about when he says; ‘Let love be genuine.’ For God has many who love Him. Of them it is written in the psalm (48:19 Vulgate): ‘He will make acknowledgment to Thee when Thou hast done good to him.’ And in Ps. 78:36 we read: ‘But they flattered Him with their mouths; they lied to Him with their tongues.’ Therefore although it may be hidden in time of peace, yet in war people are aware of nothing more vividly than love.¹³

Love should be the motive of ministry. Even when Jesus was rebuking the religious leaders in Matthew 23, the woes that were spoken were not spoken in mere anger, but the term employed for woe (*ouia*)¹⁴ was like a lament; “alas for you” is really the cry of a broken-hearted Savior. It is in love that He weeps over the city in which He is to die. There are times that ministers can sound as though they hate their

¹² William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 72.

¹³ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Luther’s Works: Lectures on Galatians* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 374.

¹⁴ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 73.

hearers, and they are hoping that they are going to be damned. One man said when asked why he stopped attending a certain church, “I was tired of having handfuls of gravel thrown in my face every Sunday.”¹⁵

Yet Christian love is not just some sentimental emotion. It is strong. In 2 Corinthians 2:4 Paul speaks of a stern letter he sent to the church correcting them, yet speaking of his love for them: “For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly for you.” The Corinthian letters were letters given by Paul for church discipline, which deal out some of Paul’s sternest correction in his writings. Paul even demands the ejection of a trouble-maker from the fellowship of the church (1 Corinthians 5); yet this does not annul his love for God and his people. The love of God is never understood as a love which allows someone to do as they like. The New Testament is clear; there are times when anger, rebuke, discipline, and punishment are a part of love (Hebrews 12:5-8; Revelation 3:19).

Joy (*chara*) is discussed next. Joy (*chara*) does not refer to earthly, human happiness. It is used most frequently in the New Testament to refer to joy that has a spiritual basis in the “Holy Ghost” (1 Thessalonians 1:6). As an aspect of the “fruit of the spirit,” in Romans 14:17 Paul writes about its originating in the Holy Ghost, or that is to say, it is “inspired by the Holy Spirit.”¹⁶ In essence Paul traces the joy of

¹⁵ Ibid., 73.

¹⁶ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 264.

the child of God to the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:6).¹⁷ The fact that Christian joy is not taken away in the midst of tribulation or sorrow gives proof that it does not rest in human but rather divine power (2 Corinthians 6:10; 8:2).

Adam Clarke writes, “The exultation that arises from a sense of God's mercy communicated to the soul in the pardon of its iniquities, and the prospect of that eternal glory of which it has the foretaste in the pardon of sin”¹⁸ (Romans 5:2). This joy is based on the work of the cross which is finished and complete. Barnes adds that *chara* is “in the love of God; in the evidences of pardon; in communion with the Redeemer, and in his service; in the duties of religion, in trial, and in the hope of heaven.”¹⁹ Wycliffe believed, “Joy is conferred by Christ upon his own followers (John 15:11) and is mediated by the Spirit (1 Thess 1:6; Rom 14:17).”²⁰ *Chara* is not just some lighthearted, fleeting emotion that the world calls “feeling good.” It is a deep-seated knowledge that we are saved in the present even though our full redemption lies in the future (1 John 3:2). The Holy Spirit and the powers of the age to come are continually transforming us into the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). “Therefore, regardless of our personal circumstances the believer experiences a joyous confidence that our destiny is in God.”²¹

This experience of joy leads to the next fruit of the Spirit, which is peace (*eirene*). The kind of peace spoken of by the Apostle does not refer to a truce between two

¹⁷ Ibid., 264. In a similar way Paul ascribes the distribution of the charismata to the work of the triune God: to the Father (1 Corinthians 12:6) and the Son (Ephesians 4:7) as their source and to the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:11) as the channel through which they proceed from the Father and the Son.

¹⁸ Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary* (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

¹⁹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes* (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

²⁰ Everett F. Harrison, *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

²¹ William Simmons, *Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1013.

parties that are at war. God's peace, like His joy, is not dependent upon the constantly changing atmospheres of the physical world in which we live. This is rather a peace with God and the peace that comes from His presence (Romans 5:1). "It is that divine peace that transcends all human understanding, yet gives full knowledge that all is well with my soul (Phil. 4.7)."²² The kind of peace Paul makes reference to is born of righteousness and grants joy in the Holy Ghost.

The term "peace" (*eirene*) came into the New Testament with a wealth of history. It is the translation of the Hebrew term *shalom*, which means peace and so much more, including soundness of body (Psalms 38:3), welfare (Genesis 43:27), and prosperity (Job 15:21). "*Shalom* really means everything that makes for a man's highest good, all that makes life life indeed."²³ Our use of the word in English has come to take somewhat of a negative meaning with the implication of the absence of war or trouble. In Hebrew peace means so much more than the mere absence of war and trouble. It is something more positive; it involves everything which makes for a man's highest good. "The greeting *shalom* does not simply express the negative wish that a man's life may be free from trouble; it expresses the positive hope and prayer that he may enjoy all good gifts and blessings from the hand of God."²⁴ The mindset in the Old and New Testament demonstrates not only the wish for no hostilities, but the mindset of positive blessings in one's life.

The Greek term for peace, *eirene*, like the Hebrew *shalom* means much more than the mere notion of the absence of war, for "it denotes rather a positive state of

²² Ibid., 1013.

²³ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 85.

²⁴ Ibid., 85.

wholeness—soundness and prosperity.”²⁵ In the LXX the word describes not only health of the body, welfare and security, but perfect serenity and tranquility, “a life and a state in which man is perfectly related to his fellowmen and his God.”²⁶ In Paul’s writings *eirene* appears mostly, but not always, in greetings and benedictions, and identifies God (God of peace, Romans 15:33) and Jesus (Lord of peace, 1 Thessalonians 3:16) as the source of peace. Peace is a state of normality consistent with the will of God, as opposed to confusion or chaos. This peace is based on the finished work of the cross through the shedding of His blood (Colossians 1:20). Jesus has annulled the law and its ordinances (Colossians 2:14), and made it possible for humanity to have peace with God, and peace with each other.

It may be said that the new relationship that we now have with God can be summed up in one word by which through Jesus we can now address God. Jesus himself addressed God as *Abba* (Mark 14:36), and now through the Spirit we have been enabled to use the same word in addressing God our Father (Romans 8:15). “*Abba* in ancient Palestine, as *yaba* still is among the Arabs today, was the word by which a little child addressed his father in the family circle.”²⁷ Our English translation is “Daddy.” What an unbelievable privilege we have been afforded through the Spirit that we can now call God by the name that only immediate intimate family members use!

Long-suffering (*makrothumia*) speaks of a spirit of resilience that refuses to attack when provoked or spitefully used (Ephesians 4:2). The term is also translated

²⁵ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 265.

²⁶ Ibid., 265.

²⁷ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 90.

patience, and is described by William Simmons as, “to hold out under a heavy load.”²⁸ Even when believers are subjected to continued pressure, they always endure with long-suffering instead of fits of rage. In Romans 2:4 Paul writes about the attribute as it relates to God, “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” God’s goodness is based on his forbearance and long-suffering; he is graciously restraining the infliction of punishment and the execution of his wrath. This goodness of God of which long-suffering is a part is intended to lead people to repentance. It is this long-suffering of God toward humanity which constitutes the basis and reason for the Christian’s patience towards others.

Makrothumia (noun), *makrothumos* (adjective), and *makrothumein* (verb) are all expressed by the concept of long-suffering and patience.²⁹ When we want to describe someone in the English language who exemplifies a lack of patience we use the term “short-tempered,” yet when describing the opposite we do not use the term “long-tempered.” If we did use the term, the words would translate into *makrothumos*, with *makro* meaning *long* and *thumos* meaning *temper*.³⁰ The term expresses an attitude both to people and events. Concerning people, it expresses patience no matter how unreasonable they may be; with events it never admits defeat, and never loses its hope and faith no matter how dark the situation may be. T.K. Abbott defines long-suffering as “the self restraint which does not hastily retaliate a wrong.”³¹ Plummer says that it is “the forbearance which endures injuries and evil deeds without being

²⁸ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1013.

²⁹ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 91.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 91.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 91.

provoked to anger or revenge.”³² Ronald Fung describes it as “a long-suffering attitude towards other people, deferring one’s anger under provocation, and refusing to retaliate for wrong done to oneself.”³³

The Apostle Paul writes in Colossians 1:11, “Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.” For the child of God, long-suffering is not a hopeless acceptance of a situation, for the scripture states patience is irradiated with joy. Those in who dwells the Spirit of God wait, not as one waits for the night, but as one who waits for the morning. The writer of Hebrews tells us that Abraham received the promise because he patiently endured, and it must be so with the Christian who has like faith (Hebrews 6:12-15). James encourages his listeners to be like the prophets who had to wait for the action of God; like the farmer who sows the seed and who then throughout the slow months waits patiently for the harvest to come (James 5:7-10). It may well be that in this age of technology and world travel which has made a god out of speed, our greatest challenge is to hurry up and wait upon the Lord.

Gentleness (*chrestotes*), the fifth fruit of the Spirit which is listed, is also translated as kindness. It is a quality which is sensitive to the mental, spiritual, and emotional load limit of other individuals. *Chrestotes* is found in the New Testament only in the Apostle Paul’s writings, although the term *chrestos* (cognate adjective) is used outside of his letters.³⁴ In Romans 2:4 the term is translated “his goodness” in reference to God’s gracious attitude toward sinners. The term translated “kindness”

³² Ibid., 91-92.

³³ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 267.

³⁴ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 267.

in 2 Corinthians 6:6, means goodness and kindness as opposed to a harsh crabbed, crooked temper. Barnes writes concerning the fifth fruit of the Spirit, “It is a disposition to be pleased; it is mildness of temper, calmness of spirit, an unruffled disposition, and a disposition to treat all with urbanity and politeness.”³⁵ It makes the temper sweet, the heart kind, and desires to make all around it as happy as possible. He adds, “This is true politeness; a kind of politeness which can far better be learned in the school of Christ ... by the study of the New Testament.”³⁶ And is a sure sign that the Spirit is at work in the heart of the believer who has encountered Jesus.

The term is used in Titus 3:4 referring to the “kindness and love of God” for humanity. In Ephesians 2:7 Paul writes of the “riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ,” demonstrating again God’s ultimate and supreme act of God’s kindness in giving Jesus Christ for our sins. In Colossians 3:12-13 Christians are commanded to clothe themselves in the spirit of kindness; when we have experienced the kindness of God, we should therefore forgive and show kindness to others. W.E. Vine comments about the spirit of kindness, saying, “It signifies not merely goodness as a quality, rather it is goodness in action, goodness expressing itself in deeds; yet not goodness expressing itself in indignation against sin, for it is contrasted with severity in Rom 11:22, but in grace and tenderness and compassion.”³⁷

In Luke 5: 39, Jesus uses the term “better” (*chrestos*), referring to wine that has become old and mellow. In the believer’s life the harshness and the roughness and

³⁵ Albert Barnes, Barnes’s Notes (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ W.E. Vine, Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

bitterness of the sinful nature are banished by kindness and the mellow graciousness of love. In the gospel of Matthew 11:30 Jesus says his “yoke is easy” (a suitable rendering would be “kindly”)³⁸ or well-fitting.³⁹ The service of Christ does not act like a slave driver but rather is a kindly thing; the task Christ gives man is tailor-made for him. Kindness (gentleness) is a lovely thing, and it is lovely because as we are treating others the way Christ has treated us.

Goodness (*agathosyne*) is understood as a faithful commitment to the benefit and well being of others. It identifies the true spirit of the law when it is uncontrolled by the sinful nature of the flesh. *Agathosyne* goodness “has a range of meaning as wide as the adjective *agathos*. But in the recent setting it may well mean generosity.”⁴⁰ The term occurs only in the Septuagint and the New Testament; therefore it is dependent on them for definition. In Romans 5:7 the scripture states, “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.” The term righteous (*dikaious* or just) man is set against the good (*agathou*) man.⁴¹ The implication is that the good man is slightly better than the just man and perhaps someone would die for him, if not for the just man. The conclusion is, “goodness is an attitude of generous kindness to others, which is happy to do far more than is required by mere justice.”⁴²

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 101.

⁴⁰ F.F. Bruce, *New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 253.

⁴¹ *Interlinear Bible: New Testament* (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

⁴² Ronald Y.K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 268.

It is the antithesis to *phthonos* (envying)⁴³ which is listed as a work of the flesh. In the Gospel of Matthew 20 Jesus tells the parable of the “laborers,” in addressing those who were upset because the master had given everyone equal pay, even those who had not worked all day, as verse 15 renders: “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good (*agathos*)?” The “evil eye” represents a grudging or hostile spirit, while the apparent meaning of “good” is “generous.” In Galatians 5:22, goodness “represents a magnanimous kindness which issues in practical generosity.”⁴⁴ Goodness is “the perpetual desire and sincere study, not only to abstain from every appearance of evil, but to do good to the bodies and souls of men to the utmost of our ability.”⁴⁵ This unfolds in the life of a good heart purified by Spirit of God; the tree is made good and so also the fruit becomes good.

Pistis (faith) has already appeared in Galatians in several places, 2:16, 3:2, and 5:5. The term used here does not denote the basic principle for salvation, justifying faith, but there seems to be an ethical view in mind. Some have suggested the term to mean trustfulness or “faith in God’s promises and mercies and loving trust towards men.”⁴⁶ It seems here *pistis* means, “Faithfulness, fidelity, that is, loyalty and trustworthiness in one’s dealings with others.”⁴⁷ Even though Paul is not referring to justifying faith, there seems to be a sense of faith that is probably attached to *pistis*

⁴³ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 253.

⁴⁴ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 268.

⁴⁵ Adam Clarke, Adam Clarke’s Commentary (Seattle, WA 2003) BibleSoft CD-ROM.

⁴⁶ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 269.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 269.

used in the current text that conveys an “appropriate measure of faith necessary for accomplishing some work for God.”⁴⁸

The decisive factor in determining the definition of the present term lies in the context in which it is used; since its eight companions denote ethical qualities, one would expect that here the term would denote the ethical quality of being faithful. The adjective *pistos* usually means “faithful” or “dependable”; however, there are occasions where Paul uses the term to mean “believing” as he does in Galatians 3:9, “faithful (believing) Abram.” In 1 Corinthians 1:9 God is called faithful (*pistos*) and in Romans 3:3 Paul speaks of “the faith (*pistis*) of God,” and he is clearly making reference to the faithfulness of God. Because God is faithful, dependable, reliable, He expects His people to be faithful also, and His Spirit enables them to be so. Paul is addressing those who have already been filled with the Spirit and therefore should know about faithfulness as opposed to the spirit of cynicism.

In 1 Corinthians 4:2 Paul writes, “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” Here Paul is speaking of Apostles and such, but as F.F. Bruce comments, “Every Christian is in some degree a steward and is expected to be trustworthy (*pistos*) in the discharge of whatever the stewardship may be.”⁴⁹ The message of the parable of the talents found in Matthew 25:14-30 is found in verse 23, “His lord said unto him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.’ ” *Pistis*, the quality of being faithful, describes the man, “on whose faithful

⁴⁸ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 254.

⁴⁹ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1013.

service we can rely, on whose loyalty we may depend, whose word we can unreservedly accept.”⁵⁰ Faith describes the person in whom, by the work of the Holy Spirit, is the fidelity of Jesus Christ, and the utter dependability of God.

Meekness (*prautes*), also translated as gentleness,⁵¹ is the opposite of an arrogant attitude that many confuse with self-confidence. Meekness is not a spirit or disposition that frequently runs roughshod over the feelings of others. Meekness is defined by Aristotle as, “the mean between excessive proneness to anger and the incapacity for anger.”⁵² In Numbers 12:3 scripture states, “Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.” This is stated because in the face of undeserved criticism, he refused to give way to a spirit of rage and actually interceded for his offenders. Jesus testifies to his own disposition in Matthew 11:29, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

This does not mean nor imply that someone is weak as a person because he/she is meek. For the same Jesus is described in Mark’s Gospel as having indignation because of the hardness of the heart of evil people, as seen in Mark 3:5, “And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.” In 2 Corinthians 10:1 Paul entreats his converts with affectionate concern in the spirit of meekness, “Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold

⁵⁰ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 269.

⁵¹ William Simmons, Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 1013.

⁵² F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 254.

toward you”; yet the words in verse 2 which follow are matched with fierce denunciation of those who would trouble them, “But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.”

Prautes does not convey the lack of spirit or courage that its translation as “meekness” or “gentleness” conveys in the English language. The Septuagint term signifies a humble disposition which submits to the divine will. In classical Greek, *prautes* was used to “describe a person in whom strength and gentleness go together.”⁵³ Moses was not a spineless creature. He was a leader who could be angry when anger was needed, and who could submit in humility when humility was needed. The same could be said for our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:

No spineless, spiritless, anemic creature could have lead men as Moses did. Moses had strength and gentleness combined. And what was true of Moses was truer still of Jesus Christ, for in Jesus there was righteous anger and there was forgiving love. Only a man who was *praus* could have both cleansed the Temple of the hucksters who traded in it and forgiven the woman taken in adultery whom all the orthodox condemned.⁵⁴

Meekness is the spirit that is connected with humility and lowliness. In Ephesians 4:2 it is referred to as a characteristic of the Christian vocation. Col 3:12 states: “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering.” It is listed as a garment of the child of God. Meekness has to do with “that lowliness and humility in which there is no

⁵³ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 269-70.

⁵⁴ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 120-121.

arrogance and in which there is only the delight to serve.”⁵⁵ It is not a stern discipline which inflicts the punishment that strict justice demands. It is a spirit which lives at peace as much as possible with others, not an aggressive, belligerent spirit. It is the spirit in which those who are in opposition must be met (2 Timothy 2:5). A strong example is given by Barclay to demonstrate how gentleness can impact opposition:

Suppose we go into a room on a bitterly cold day and find that the windows are frozen on the inside, there are two things we can do. We may try to rub away the ice on the inside of the window panes, but the only result will be that the harder we rub the quicker the ice will reform. Or, we may light a fire in the grate, and the window will clear itself and the ice will melt away. Heat does what friction cannot do. In dealing with those whom we believe to be in error gentleness will do what the bludgeon will never do.⁵⁶

Meekness should pervade the whole Christian life. James 3:13 teaches that the life of a man who is wise will have gentleness. It is a spirit which will commend itself to men and God. “The root meaning of *prautes* is self control. It is the complete control of the passionate part of our nature.”⁵⁷ When we have meekness we can have strength and gentleness, gentleness and yet not weakness; we can be angry and not sinful. It is the secret of conquest and power, for the meek will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5). Yet no mere man has the power for this in himself; the passions of the flesh are too strong and break their leash. That is why it is listed as a fruit of the Spirit. Such self-control can only come when we are God-controlled through the supernatural power of the Holy Ghost.

⁵⁵ William Barclay, Flesh and Spirit (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 120-121.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 118.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 121.

Temperance (*egkrateia*), or self-control, has something in common with meekness (*prautes*); whereas gentleness addresses the area of anger in one's life, temperance addresses more of sensual passions. *Egkrateia* is related to the term *kratos*,⁵⁸ which refers to the mighty power of God. The implication, therefore, is that through the mighty power of God one is able to subdue the fleshly impulses. In the work *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle deals with the term *egkratēia* and its opposite *akrates*, and notes, "The man who is *egkrates* has powerful passions, but keeps them under control; the *akrates* does not deliberately choose the wrong, but he has no strength to resist temptation."⁵⁹ Plato sets the term against overindulgence to food and sex.

In 1 Corinthians 9:25, Paul writes, "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." The term *temperate* referred to a nine month period in which the athletes trained for the race, during which time they restrained from overindulgence, trained at a specific time, left off from love.⁶⁰ In 1 Corinthians 7:9, Paul speaks of relationships between the sexes and discourages marriage, then adds, "But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." "That is to say, if self-control proves impossible, then marriage is permissible."⁶¹ In Titus 1:8, it is

⁵⁸ Albert Barnes, *Barnes's Notes* (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM. It is derived from *en* and *kratos*, "strength," and has reference to the power or ascendancy which we have over exciting and evil passions of all kinds. It denotes the self-rule which a man has over the evil propensities of his nature. Our word *temperance* we use now in a much more limited sense, as referring mainly to abstinence from intoxicating drinks. But the word here used is employed in a much more extended signification. It includes the dominion over all evil propensities, and may denote continence, chastity, self-government, moderation in regard to all indulgences as well as abstinence from intoxicating drinks.

⁵⁹ F.F. Bruce, *New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 255.

⁶⁰ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies: From the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1978),

⁶¹ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), 122.

laid down as a requirement in order to fill the office of an elder, “But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate.”

A difference should be noted in the view of self-control in the mindset of the Greek philosophy and that of the scripture. For the Greeks, self-control was based on humanistic understanding of life, “the idea of a free and autonomous person who in self-mastery controls all things and in self-restraint maintains his freedom in face of evil passions and pleasures.”⁶² In the New Testament, self-control refers to the mastery of one’s self and the patterning of one’s life by the cross, in the way which God desires through the Spirit.

The term is used more often with a sexual connotation than not, and therefore some believe that “chastity” is a good rendering. Adam Clarke comments on the term and defines it as, “continence, self-government, or moderation, principally with regard to sensual or animal appetites.”⁶³ Additional insight is given by Barnes: “The sense here is, that the influences of the Holy Spirit on the heart make a man moderate in all indulgences; teach him to restrain his passions, and to govern himself; to control his evil propensities, and to subdue all inordinate affection.”⁶⁴ In short, temperance is chastity, a virtue which the Christians brought into the world and an attribute that comes into a man’s life when Christ is in his heart. Temperance is something that helps him live in this world, yet helps him to keep his garments unspotted by the world.

⁶² Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 271.

⁶³ Adam Clarke, Adam Clarke’s Commentary (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

⁶⁴ Albert Barnes, Barne’s Notes (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

In Galatians 5:24 Paul continues addressing the qualities and the lifestyle that accompany the individual living in the realm of the Spirit with an emphasis on the dynamic of sanctification, “And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” The term “crucified” (aorist tense)⁶⁵ points to a single crisis experience of the past, their participation in Christ’s historical crucifixion. It is likely that this participation is a reference to their conversion or some other significant crisis experience. Yet the active voice of the verb places an emphasis on the believer’s actions, “in turning to Christ and becoming members of his body, they radically renounce fellowship with sin, whose seat is in the flesh.”⁶⁶ Put another way, “All genuine Christians have crucified the flesh-are so far from obeying its dictates and acting under its influence, that they have crucified their sensual appetites; they have nailed them to the cross of Christ, where they have expired with him.”⁶⁷ In the end the believer has made a definite break with the flesh through his crucifixion with Christ.

For the Apostle Paul, the law and the flesh belong to the same pre-Christian order. In the same way the cross severed his relationship with the law, the cross also severs

⁶⁵ Robert Jamieson, A.R. Fausset, David Brown, Jamieson Fausset and Brown Commentary (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM. Have crucified, [aorist, estaurosan, 'crucified'] the flesh. They nailed it to the cross once for all when they became Christ's (Rom 6:3-4). They keep it now in a state of crucifixion (Rom 6:6); so that the Spirit can produce in them, comparatively uninterrupted by it, "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5:22). 'Man, by faith, is dead to the former standing-point of sin, and rises to a new life of communion with Christ (Col 3:3). The act by which they crucified the flesh with its lust is already accomplished in principle; but the outward confirmation of the life must harmonize with the tendency given to the inward life' (Gal 5:25). We are to be executioners of the body of sin, which caused the acting of all cruelties on Christ's body.

⁶⁶ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 274. This concept was introduced in Galatians 2:20 where Paul writes, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Similarly, Paul teaches that our old self has been crucified with Christ, so the Christian is no longer the servant of sin (Romans 6:6).

⁶⁷ Albert Barnes, Barnes's Notes (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

the believer's relationship to the flesh, only as they reckon themselves to be crucified with Christ. The crucifixion or death of the old self-centered ego gives way to the new Christ-centered mind, and therefore we can say we no longer live, but it is Christ which lives within us (Galatians 2:20). In another sense, there is the need to continually crucify the flesh, to continuously seek to live in obedience to the Spirit's leading. It is only through the Spirit that we are able to put to death all the base desires of the flesh. This continual pursuit is the practical outworking of a once-for-all experience one encounters in their death with Christ and/or conversion. "It is only on the basis of their spiritual participation in the historical crucifixion of Christ and by the Spirit's power that believers can hope to fulfill the ethical obligation to crucify the flesh with its passions and desires."⁶⁸ A precise summation is given as F.F. Bruce quotes J. Denny:

Ideally, we must understand, this crucifixion of the flesh is involved in Christ's crucifixion; really, it is effected by it. Whosoever sees into the secret of Calvary...is conscious that the doom of sin is in it; to take it as real, and to stand in any real relation to it, is death to the flesh with its passions and desires.⁶⁹

In a conclusion of Galatians, one can deduce that a relationship in Christ is indeed more than just a formal position. When someone becomes a Christian they acknowledge the lordship of Jesus Christ and that new position impacts all facts of their life. Although salvation is never earned, as noted previously, there are certain lifestyles which cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, that testify to the reality that the

⁶⁸ Ronald Y.K. Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 275.

⁶⁹ F.F. Bruce, New International Greek Testament Commentary: Commentary on Galatians (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 256.

individual practicing contrary lifestyles of the kingdom of heaven have not truly entered or begun to enter the kingdom of heaven. The characteristics of the works of the flesh are nothing less than verification that whosoever is performing such works on a continual basis, with no remorse, has not encountered the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, the fruit of the Spirit found in a life is nothing less than a clear indication that one has clearly been impacted by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The fruit produced in the life of a believer is nothing less than miraculous in and of itself. When one understands the depth of the change the gospel describes, a realization of the utter hopelessness of humanity is perceived when left to human resources for salvation from the flesh. When the fruit of the Spirit listed in this discussion transpires in one's life, it changes the entire makeup of the fleshly nature; this clearly demonstrates that a life lived with the evidence of the fruit of the Spirit can only be produced by the power of God, therefore identifying the impact of the encounter.

CHAPTER SEVEN: JOHN WESLEY AND HIS PURSUIT OF HOLINESS

John Wesley is well-known for his ministry and as a founder of the Evangelical revival. “Among Christian evangelists, missionaries, organizers, and preachers of all time, John Wesley stands in the front rank.”¹ As the movement became assimilated in middle class American Protestantism, a “holiness” movement emerged out of Methodism which has led to various independent and Pentecostal denominations.² Despite the variations of belief and practice, most of those associations share “an emphasis on those doctrines that indicate the power of the Holy Spirit to confirm the faith of the believer and to transform one’s personal life.”³ Wesley is well-known in many religious circles for his theology of holiness and the personal pursuit of his doctrine on Christian perfection. For Wesley, holiness became more than simply a biblical concept; it became a reality obtainable in this life. He believed that holiness was possible through an encounter with God’s Holy Spirit.

As we look at John Wesley’s life and perception of holiness, sanctification, or “Christian perfection,” this writer feels the need to note several aspects of his life that were pivotal in shaping his theology concerning God’s work of grace. The first period of his life that had a major role in developing him, as well as his theology and understanding of God were his Oxford years (1720-1735).⁴ Wesley entered the

¹ Vergilius Ferm, Encyclopædia of Religion (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1945), 821. The United Societies that developed out of these revivals came to be known as a distinct movement of the Christian Church; Methodist.

² Wendy Doniger, Merriam-Webster’s Encyclopedia of World Religions (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster Inc. 1999), 723.

³ Ibid., 723. They share in doctrines especially associated with the teaching about accuracy and Christian Perfection as it is related to John Wesley.

⁴ Ronald H. Stone, Johns Wesley’s Life & Ethics (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 42-63.

Christ Church at age 17 and was ordained a deacon in 1725. The following year he was elected to the fellowship⁵ or faculty position at Lincoln College. In 1729 Oxford called him back from the rural area of Wroot and Epworth where he ministered, worked on his father's dissertation *Job*, and assisted his father in writing sermons. Arriving back at Lincoln, Wesley assumed leadership of a group his brother Charles and William Morgan had formed, which they had first referred to as "Our Society." At this point Wesley had already been influenced by William Law's work entitled *Christian Perfection*.⁶ After reading the work, he attempted its principles upon his family home and was instructed to go elsewhere with his church formulas.

Under Wesley's leadership the group studied and began to practice guidelines considered characteristic of primitive Christianity. A few of their rituals were weekly communion, regular prayer life, scriptural study, and disciplined study. In Wesley's case he kept an account of his entire day, reflecting on his prayer life and spiritual condition in a diary. The group also ventured into ministries, such as to prisons where they would have Bible study, preach, and even raise funds for assistance to the prisoners. From the prisons they extended their concern for the poor and established a school for them, using their own funds as a portion of the budget. The group's religious zeal was perceived as critical of the lax religious atmosphere at Oxford; therefore some responded by calling them the "Holy Club" and "Methodists." The latter, coming from a name used in the seventeenth century for methodical people, became a favorite. One can only imagine, as Lee suggests, "a little group of men

⁵ Once someone was elected into a fellowship, a professor could teach or not and still receive a stipend, which Wesley received even while assisting his father.

⁶ Umphrey Lee, *The Lord's Horseman* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 36.

from several colleges-- servitors, first-year men, tutors, and fellows--meeting together at regular hours for long study and devotion, or marching together to early sacramental services; some of them wearing their hair long, as John did, to save money; giving away all they could get; preserving puritanical abstinence from even innocent pleasures; and not hesitating to rebuke all who differed from them---this spectacle could not fail to excite ribald comment.”⁷ These are the early beginnings of the Methodist patterns. It was said George Whitefield had stated he was ashamed at times for people seeing him knocking at Wesley’s door.

The uniqueness of the Holy Club resided in its extremism. It was a primitive form of Christianity that attempted to guide every hour of the day in critical service to God. It could be perceived as a somewhat passionate form of spiritual asceticism in a desire to express itself against the hedonistic lukewarm spiritual atmosphere at Oxford. However, the Holy Club’s attempt to transform Oxford was not successful. Wesley discovered that genuine revival and spiritual renewal must be more than legislative attempts to force people to repent—rather, revival must reflect an internal renewal that follows God’s precepts out of love and the inward man renewed. The lesson Wesley learned from this period of his life was that service to God cannot be legislated. As he would discover later, an inward faith in God was a necessity for those who wanted to pursue the character of Christ. Holiness and perfection are not qualities man can earn or form himself into by a rigid schedule of religiosity—they must begin from within the heart of faith.

⁷ Umphrey Lee, The Lord’s Horseman (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 37.

In 1735 Wesley agreed to travel to Georgia as a missionary to the Native Americans. His brother Charles was hired as a secretary for Colonial James Edward Thorpe. Wesley believed that Georgia offered more for the cultivation of his spirit than did Oxford, and also “the hope of saving his own soul was at stake.”⁸ Wesley felt Native Americans had no corroding society standing in way of their understanding. He saw America as the idealistic place to mortify the flesh and live like a child off of the nature and fruits of the earth. On the voyage to America Wesley and other clergy immediately got to work. An excerpt from his journal demonstrates how zealous the missionaries were:

Our commons way of living was this: From four in the morning till five each of us used private prayer. From five till seven we read the Bible together, carefully comparing it (that we might not lean to our own understandings) with the writings of the earliest ages. At seven we breakfasted. At eight were the public prayers, at which were present usually between thirty or forty of our eighty passengers. From nine to twelve I commonly learned German, and Mr. Delamotte Greek. My brother writ sermons, and Mr. Ingram read some treatise of divinity or instructed some children. At twelve we met together to give an account to one another what we had done since our last meeting, and what we designed to do before our next. About one we dined. The time from dinner to four we spent with people in public reading, partly in reading to those whom each of us had taken in charge, or in speaking to them severally, as need required. At four were the evening prayers, when either the second lesson was explained-as it always was in the morning-or the children were catechized and instructed before the congregation. From five to six we again used private prayer. From six to seven I read in our cabin to two or three passengers of whom were about eighty English on board, an each of my brethren to a few more of theirs. At seven I joined with the Germans in their public

⁸ Umphrey Lee, The Lord's Horseman (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 40.

service, while Mr. Ingram was reading between the decks to as many as desired to hear. At eight we met again, to exhort and instruct one another. Between nine and ten we went to bed, where neither the roaring of the sea nor the motion of the ship could take away the refreshing sleep, which God gave us.⁹

One can note the rigid schedule they maintained throughout the day. While on board the ship they encountered no less than three storms. During the third storm Wesley noticed how calm the Germans were in comparison to the screaming English. Wesley asked the Germans if they were afraid and the reply was *no*, not even the women and children. He responded by going over to the unbelievers and pointing out the difference between the one that “feareth” God and those that “feareth him not” during the hour of trial.

While in Savannah, Wesley had several interesting dilemmas. In one situation his brother fell out of favor with Oglethorpe because of an alleged controversy in which Oglethorpe was accused of having an affair with two women and in which Charles became involved. Oglethorpe left Charles on one occasion while he was deathly sick, but later they were reconciled. Charles wrote his brother a letter addressing the issue, thus pulling John Wesley into the scandal to such a degree that one of the women tried to attack him personally.¹⁰

Wesley also met a girl by the name Miss Sophy to whom he became greatly affectionate. While traveling together on one occasion he informed her, “Miss

⁹ Percy Livingston Parker, *Journal of John Wesley* (Seattle, Washington 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

¹⁰ Mrs. Hawkins pulled a pistol out on John and also a pair of scissors in which she threatened to have his blood. Oglethorpe was cleared of all the charges.

Sophy, I should think myself happy if I was to spend my life with you.”¹¹ He goes on to describe, while traveling with her, his feelings toward her in his Journal:

After all the company but Miss Sophy was gone, Mr. Delamotte went out and left us alone again. Finding her still the same, my resolution failed. At the end of a very serious conversation I took her by the hand, and, perceiving she was not displeased, I was so utterly disarmed, that that hour I should have engaged myself for life, had it not been for the full persuasion of her entire sincerity, and in consequence of which I doubted not but she was resolved (as she had said) “never to marry while she lived.”

A moment’s reflection when she was gone convinced me that I had done foolishly. And I once more resolved by God’s help to be more wary for the future. Accordingly, though I saw her every day in the following week, I touched her not.¹²

Some suggest that John became so involved with her as to kiss her. He consulted his Moravian friends as to if he should marry her and they cast lots and came up with, “think of it no more.” He goes on in his journal to describe the struggle of letting her go:

I came home and went into my garden. I walked up and down, seeking rest but finding none. From the beginning of my life to this hour I had not known one such as this. God let loose my inordinate affection upon me, and the poison thereof drank up my spirit. I was stupid as if half awake, and yet in the sharpest pain I ever felt. To see her no more: that thought was as the piercings of a sword; it would not be borne, nor shaken off. I was weary of the world, of light, of life. Yet one way remained to seek God—a very present help in the time of trouble. And I did seek after God, but I found him not. I forsook him before; now He forsook me. I could not pray. Then indeed the snares of death were about me; the pains of hell overtook me. Yet I struggled for life; and though I had neither words nor

¹¹ Uphrey Lee, The Lord’s Horseman (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 54.

¹² *Ibid.*, 56.

thoughts, I lifted up my eyes to the Prince that is highly exalted, and supplied the place of them as I could: and about four o'clock He so far took the cup from me that I drank so deeply of it no more.¹³

Miss Sophy latter married and an affidavit was filed against Wesley of trying to seduce her, sworn by Sophy herself.

One more detail worth mentioning concerning Wesley's trip to Georgia was his disappointment in his desire to reach the Native Americans. His image of them as "noble savages" living in nature and therefore uninhibited by declining civilization was more fantasy than reality. He describes them in the following manner:

Every one doeth what is right in his own eyes; and if it appears wrong to his neighbour, the person aggrieved usually steals on the other unawares, and shoots him, scalps him, or cuts off his ears... They are likewise all, except perhaps the Choctaws, gluttons, drunkards, thieves, dissemblers, liars. They are implacable, unmerciful; murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, murderers of their own children-it being a common thing for a son to shoot his father or mother because they are old and past labour, and for a woman either to procure abortion, or to throw her child into the next river, because she will go with her husband to war.¹⁴

This description indicates why the colonists lived in fear of attack. A great deal of evidence supports Wesley's account. One Frenchman who had been captured said their days consisted of mostly eating, drinking, and smoking. Wesley's interest in Georgia was now lost; his desire for instructing the Native Americans was all but a thing of the past.

John was a disappointed man. Having seen a life he could only dream of, he learned first hand how little he could depend upon his fellowman and even more

¹³ Uphrey Lee, The Lord's Horseman (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 56-57.

¹⁴ Uphrey Lee, The Lord's Horseman (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), 59.

importantly, he could not trust himself. As he left Georgia he was haunted by the blessed assurance and peace the Moravians had displayed. Through outward storms and inward passions there seemed to be an inward piece missing in his life. On 2 December 1737 a disillusioned Wesley left Savannah for Charleston where he set sail for England. Later he would write concerning the disappointment of his journey, “I went to America, to convert the Indians, but oh, who shall convert me?”¹⁵

What impact did this have upon Wesley’s life? He had already witnessed religious decay in his years at Oxford, coupled with failed romances. His own sister later claimed that those experiences drove him to pour his soul heavily into his Holy Club and yet with little success. Again he learned salvation was something that could not be legalized, no matter how hard he tried. Not only did he see the failure of civilized, educated, organized religion, now he had seen the failure in trying to educate and bring salvation to the colonies in America and to the native inhabitants of that continent. This was followed by another failed romance and more personal attacks upon him. Adding in his own personal struggles with his flesh and the personal feelings he had wrestled with over the opposite sex, he began to wonder about his own salvation. He is almost like Paul as he cries out, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”¹⁶ In the same way that Paul struggled with the members of his body, now Wesley’s trip to America had opened his eyes to what was inside of his heart. His failed attempts at Christian perfection through self-discipline and good works, and his discouragement over his experiences

¹⁵ Percy Livingston Parker, Journal of John Wesley (Seattle, Washington 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

¹⁶ Romans. 8. 24.

in the New World, prepared him for the same type of conversion experienced by Paul and Martin Luther. This would deepen his understanding of Christian perfection and how the work of entire sanctification was wrought in the life of the believer.

Wesley had been taught by the German Moravians to believe in a personal attitude of faith. This faith was sufficient for salvation. Salvation was not something to be striven after. Instead it was an accomplished fact. Wesley began to seek after this kind of experience in his inner life. He was ready for all of his energy, which had been taken up in inner conflicts, to be released into the one channel which would be the sole outlet, with few exceptions, until his last days--what he would later call, practical religion. Practical religion was something lived, something practiced (as will be discussed later) because of an inner touch or impact. That impact came on [24 May 1738], when attending a meeting on Aldersgate Street where Luther's preface to the book of Romans was being read. Wesley wrote:

I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.¹⁷

A prayer for the holiness and perfect love of Christ seems to have been the chief aim of the Wesleyan movement throughout its history. For over two hundred years Wesley and his followers have been known because of their desire for ethical purity. The Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification, also known as Christian perfection, expresses that concern. His personal contribution was that true biblical Christianity finds its highest expression and test of authenticity in the practical and ethical experience of the individual Christian and the church, then secondarily in doctrinal

¹⁷ Percy Livingston Parker, Journal of John Wesley (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

definition. The fact that he believed this and practiced it so adamantly has lead many to refer to him in church history as a systematic practitioner rather than the informed theologian. His success in winning men and women to Christ and shaping them in service to God was something he was exceptional at accomplishing. One quality distinguished his interpretation of God's ways with humanity from the religion of his day, namely, the belief that biblical Christianity must demonstrate its reality in "a faith that works by divine love" in the routine of everyday life.

Wesley had a keen interest in the life and witness of the early church fathers because he was convinced that their experiences of grace demonstrated best how men and women in the past had responded wholeheartedly to the will of God in their lives. At Oxford the English translation of the Fathers was one of the main sources of his understanding of Christian perfection as well as the nature of salvation. Their influence, along with the insights regarding holiness and love that he gleaned from writers like Thomas Kempis, William Law, and Jeremy Taylor, helped to mold his thinking away from the Reformed view of his time. The concept "faith working by love," as the ultimate hermeneutic for understanding God's entire plan of salvation strongly shaped his teachings on sanctification. The royal "law of love" defined God's expectations for the life and witness of those who receive that salvation."¹⁸

Although Wesley used observations from contemporary experience and the lives of the church fathers to shape his understanding, he nevertheless held the scriptures as ultimate and authoritative. He would refuse any teaching unless it could stand its ground under the pure light of revelation. John Wesley is well known for bringing all

¹⁸ Stanley N. Gundry, Five Views on Sanctification (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 13.

observation, experience, and the rational mind to the Scripture for the final judgment. Wesley would say on one occasion, “I allow no other rule, whether of faith of practice, than the Holy Scriptures”.¹⁹

“He described Scripture as the inviolable Word of God and as the words of the spirit of God.”²⁰ His desire to uphold the scripture has increasing importance today because of those who would make tradition, reason, and experience coequal with God’s Word in theological method. Other sources may confirm, enhance, or bring to life the truth of the scripture, but scripture alone must be the final authority. Wesley did not feel like a slave to scripture. Although scripture was the fountainhead of his Christian theology, he used other sources to confirm the truth of the Word. Scripture alone remains the only authority sufficient for salvation, but he felt the freedom of appealing to tradition, reason, and experience. His holistic approach resulted in a more genuinely catholic theology.

Wesley’s passion for Christian holiness was driven by his conviction that the Word of God teaches by precept and promise and that Christians have been provided with a relationship to God that allows for the destruction for all the works of the devil, that is, all sin. He never taught that Christians who were sanctified could become sinless in the sense that they could not fall again through disobedience. He did teach that so long as human beings were the creatures of free will, they could respond obediently and therefore disobediently to the grace of God. As Melvin Dieter writes,

¹⁹ Ibid. 13.

²⁰ Donald Thorsen, The Wesleyan Quadrilateral: Scripture, Tradition, Reason, & Experience as a Model of Evangelical Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 77.

They would never be free from the possibility of deliberate, willful sinning in this life. They could, however, be delivered from the necessity of voluntary transgressions by living in moment-by-moment obedience to God's will. Whatever difficulty might arise in defining the theology, content, or means of attaining such a loving relationship with God, it could mean no less than freedom from the dominion of sin in this life. It did not, however, mean freedom from all the effects of sin in the deranged worldly order in which we experience even the most perfect of our present relationships under grace. Total freedom from the effects as well as the presence of all sin had to await the glory to come.²¹

Wesley was of the opinion that neither love nor the Holy One makes us infallible, so the potential to make many mistakes was possible.

Wesley believed the overruling and supreme purpose of the plan of salvation was to renew humanity's heart in the image of God. Wesley concurred that God had promised salvation from all willful sin, using passages such as 1 John 3:8; Romans 8:3, 4; 1 Thessalonians 5:23, and others. He had the conviction that passages such as 1 John 4:17 indicated that sanctification took place before death. "By grace God would restore to us the holiness that had been lost in the fall by our first parents."²²

In a sermon declaring his lifelong teaching on this doctrine he states:

Ye know that religion which does not answer this end, all that stops short Him that created it, is no other than a poor farce, and a mere mockery of God, to the destruction of our own soul...By nature ye are wholly corrupted. By grace ye shall be wholly renewed.²³

²¹ Stanley N. Gundry, Five Views on Sanctification (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 14.

²² *Ibid.*, 15.

²³ Stanley N. Gundry, Five Views on Sanctification (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 15.

In Wesley's theology two opposing dynamics come together, that of freedom and dependence. Since only the merits of the work of Christ can ever bring man to the saving knowledge of salvation, thus the grace of God alone gives man the freedom to respond to this offer. Man is a free moral agent and has a choice, but only the grace of God would give him the opportunity to make that choice. So, in the end there is a subjective element of salvation and sanctification combined with a more prevalent objective element, the grace of God. The agent of this call to salvation/justification and sanctification is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's work of regeneration in the heart is the beginning point of sanctification. We have been given the power over sin, which Wesley believed was the birthright of every child of God, as we seek to be reformed in His image. Each person who is born again, from the moment of regeneration, has been given a promise of victory over sin and has the power of the Holy Spirit to aid them in their everyday life.

A problem existed with what Wesley referred to as a "systemic illness," or what we would call the old nature, the old element of rebellion against the will of God. For the child of God this rebellion weakened their will to live holy lives and divided their intention to love God and neighbor without reservation or limitation. Wesley felt that the gospel had promised freedom from the dominion of sin for every Christian, even the unhappy inner struggles. God's grace was always moving the child of God to a life of greater peace, happiness, and love. There was a remedy for this systemic illness-- entire sanctification, a personal definitive work of God's sanctifying grace in which the war within oneself would cease and the heart fully released rebellion in wholehearted love toward God and others. The relationship could be accomplished,

not by any moral or ethical standard, but only by faith, the same kind that is required to accept Christ's sacrifice for sin in salvation. "It was a total death to sin and an entire renewal in the image of God."²⁴

The time at which this entire sanctification occurred did not need to be chronologically distinct from justification and the new birth, but logically it was distinct in the continuum of salvation. John Wesley allowed no stopping point in the child of God's quest for holiness, no point of conclusion. "Wesley understood entire sanctification, or perfection in love, then, as a continuum of grace and response that leads persons from the guilt and despair of their sin to the knowledge of God and, by faith in His grace in Jesus Christ, to the crisis moment of the justification and the new birth."²⁵ The life of sanctification springs from the regenerated life created by the Holy Spirit, and continues to call one to moment-by-moment obedience to the will of God, which is the expression of His holiness and love. He set before his hearers the promise of a heart perfected in love, a personal restoration to the moral image of God, and the responsibility and power to express that love in relationship with God and neighbor. Through Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the flesh that is bent on sinning could be cleansed and a believing heart could be imparted, and a bent to loving obedience the attitude of one's life.

Probably the best window on Wesley's concept of entire sanctification is to be found in his treatise, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, produced in 1766. Because this doctrine was so misunderstood, John took great lengths to state in what

²⁴ Stanley N. Gundry, *Five Views on Sanctification* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 17.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

sense Christians are not and can never hope to be perfect. First, they are not perfect in knowledge. Those who have accepted God's grace must still study and develop their minds to learn, to avoid fanaticism, and even then some of the mysteries of the kingdom of God could slip their minds. Secondly, since those who are saved are not perfect in knowledge, neither can they be free of all mistakes, especially in terms of things unessential to salvation. Thus, they will err in their judgment of people, their character, and even in their interpretation of the Holy Scriptures. "Nay, with regard to the Holy Scriptures, themselves, as careful they are to avoid it, the best of men are liable to mistake,"²⁶ exclaims Wesley. Just because someone had been imparted with the love of God did not render the person infallible or omniscient. Third, Christians are not free from infirmities. He believed that Christians could still be affected with things such as weakness or slowness of understanding, incoherency of thought and dullness of apprehension. Wesley writes, "As long as we dwell in a house of clay, it is liable to affect the mind; sometimes by dulling or darkening the understanding, and sometimes more directly by damping and depressing the soul."²⁷

Fourth, perfect love does not eliminate temptation. The Bible does not promise this, but states that the children of God are to be steadfast in the midst of temptation. Wesley would say that freedom from trial belongs not to this life. Finally, Wesley rejected the idea of a perfection that was static, or the idea that someone had arrived. For the child of God, one would always increase and advance as one improves in the grace of God. Those whose hearts were washed in the blood of Christ must continue to grow. His Christian perfection was not static but dynamic, not a "perfected

²⁶ Kenneth J. Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 172.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 173.

perfection” but a “perfecting perfection.”²⁸ “How much so ever any man hath attained, or in how high a degree so ever he is perfect,” Wesley warns, “he hath still need to grow in grace, and daily to advance in the knowledge and love of God his Savior.”²⁹ No room was allowed for spiritual elitism. This emphasis on growth must not be misunderstood to imply that Christian perfection is not in the soul an actualization of grace, a realization of holiness that is both preceded and followed by process. If one does not hold the process and instantaneousness of his theology in proper balance, significant interpretive errors will result. The genius of Wesley as a theologian is seen in his ability to hold the elements together--process and realization, a gradual element and an instantaneous one- in a subtle balance. Even after some have experienced the work of Christian perfection, there will still be a continual growth in grace. It is important to note, as Collins states, it will be a pure heart that continues to grow in the favor of God and not one impure with evil motives of sin.

Then what is entire sanctification or Christian perfection? They are perfect in the sense that they are adult Christians, not babes in Christ. Wesley is quick to point out that babes do not sin because even they are perfect in the sense of not committing sin, the seed of God is in them and, “Whosoever is born of God cannot voluntarily transgress any command of God.”³⁰ The difference between those who are babes in Christ and those who are mature is noted in two areas. First they are free from evil thoughts. Thoughts involving ill will, lust, envy, or such will not be present in the heart of a mature Christian. Wesley states in 1766, “But it is only of grown

²⁸ Kenneth J. Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 173.

²⁹ Ibid., 173.

³⁰ Ibid., 174.

Christians it can be affirmed, they are in such a sense perfect, as, to be free from evil thoughts.”³¹ However, a distinction is made between evil thoughts and wandering thoughts. Evil thoughts are thoughts that wander away from God, thus atheistic, and the latter those that wander from the particular point at hand. In the first sense we can be released from an unbelieving heart, but we can never be released from a wandering heart or those that just stray from the point at hand, which are no more sinful, Wesley would say, “than the motion of the blood in our veins.”³²

Second, those perfected in love will be free from evil tempers. John writes, “By perfection, I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and man ruling all the tempers, words, and actions, the whole heart by the whole life.”³³ In the negative sense the Christian experiences freedom from unholy tempers as pride, self-will, and the love of the world, which had been part of an earlier disposition bent on backsliding away from God. According to Wesley, the believer feels no contrary principle within, but the heart has been cleansed from inbred sin by the Holy Spirit. For Wesley the emphasis was not on the limitation or restriction for the mature Christian, but the stress is on the change, in terms of holy tempers, for those mature in the faith. Albert Outler maintains that although Wesley incorporated the forensic images of Latin Christianity into his conception of justification, he looked to Eastern Christianity for his understanding of the “participation motif” so evident in his doctrine of entire sanctification:

The code words, in Latin Christianity have been ‘pardon,’ ‘acquittal,’ ‘remission,’ ‘final glory,’ etc; in

³¹ Kenneth J. Collins, The Scripture Way of Salvation (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 175.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

Greek Christianity: ‘forgiveness,’ ‘reconciliation,’ participation,’ ‘perfection.’ Latin Christianity has been dominated by forensic images, metaphors from the law courts (Roman and medieval); Greek Christianity has been fascinated by visions of ontological ‘participation in God’: *metousia theou*. One stresses the cross; the other points to the Cross but also past it, to the glory beyond.³⁴

In other words, salvation is not just a forensic exchange in the sense that people who are really sinners are declared to be saints. No, what Wesley had in mind was an experience that was transformational through the powerful grace of God. What Wesley believed in was the concept of a divine impartation. Wesley viewed salvation as God’s deliverance from the guilt of sin in the work of justification, the dominion of sin in regeneration, and from it being in entire sanctification. Sanctification was a work in which God’s grace was imparted, “that is, believers actually become holy as a result of both divine favor and enabling presence.”³⁵ This is a different perspective than one in which individuals remain sinners while the blood of Christ merely covers them.

Positively speaking, Christian perfection involves the freedom graciously restored to obey the two great commandments, of which Jesus spoke, to “love the Lord with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all our mind, ...[and] your neighbor as yourself.”³⁶ Nothing contrary to love remains in the soul. All your thoughts and actions are governed by pure love. Wesley elaborates:

It [Christian perfection] is the giving God all our heart;
it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is

³⁴ Kenneth J. Collins, *The Scripture Way of Salvation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 176.

³⁵ Kenneth J. Collins, *John Wesley A Theological Journey* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 90.

³⁶ Matthew 22:37-39.

the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body and substance to God. In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heart from all filthiness, all inward as well as outward pollution. It is a renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of Him that created it. In yet another, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves...this is the whole and sole of perfection, as a train of writings prove to a demonstration, which I have believed and taught these forty years, from the year 1735 to the year 1765.³⁷

Entire sanctification is love replacing sin, and conquering everything vile and ungodly in our lives. The moral image has been renewed to its glory and splendor. The creature now reflects the image that his creator intended. For Wesley, as for the apostle Paul, there was nothing higher than the love of God reigning in the soul without a rival.

In assessing the doctrine of Christian perfection or entire sanctification, one must avoid making the experience a magical, non-moral affair. The cleansing which the sanctifying spirit of God effects in our life goes deeper than the heart or conscience. The Christian perfection that Wesley was convinced of has its beginnings on the human side in moral crises he called death to sin, but he understood its continuation to be maintained by a life of obedient trust. The mature Wesley warned, “Does not talking of a justified or sanctified state tend to mislead men; almost naturally leading them to trust what was done in one moment? Whereas we are every moment pleasing or displeasing to God, according to the whole of our present tempers and outward

³⁷ John Wesley, A Plain Account of Christian Perfection (Seattle, WA 2003) Biblesoft CD-ROM.

behavior.”³⁸ Wesley guards his position against a charge some have accused him of, namely speaking of sin in terms of a quantum, a thing like a rotten tooth which must be eradicated. For him, sin was not a quantity, but rather a quality, not a substance but a condition. Wesley spoke of sin as a disease and of Christ as the Great Physician. Holiness was thus spiritual health restored, but if we are to remain whole we must obey God’s laws of moral and spiritual well being. Entire sanctification is not a magical act that changes the substance of our souls, but it is rather a moral crisis that restores us to a life that evolves around Christ.

Through his life and struggles Wesley came to understand that the work of sanctification was only possible by grace through faith. As we have seen through the examples presented from the book of Exodus, holiness originated with the claim of God, not man. Faith must be the foundation. Wesley understood that sanctification is possible only through God’s Holy Spirit.

Wesley did not see sanctification as only a one-time experience. It is an on-going relationship with God’s presence. Not only is sanctification an inward experience, it is a daily practical lifestyle-- a lifestyle of faith that works by divine love. Sanctification is not just forgiveness of sin but is a transformation of character in the person who encounters God.

Experiencing revival can be nothing less than God’s spirit claiming us afresh for the purpose for which He created us. This kind of biblical revival will produce a pursuit of holiness, not a holiness that has no impact on our daily lives, but a holiness that will so overwhelm our hearts in a love for God and our neighbor that it will be

³⁸ William M. Greathouse, From the Apostles to Wesley (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1979), 114.

reflected in our character. The sanctifying presence of God will change who we are, and induce us to pursue a lifestyle of moral purity. From a biblical perspective, when God claims us, holy perimeters will be drawn about our lives that will affect our conduct. We will live our daily lives in the law of God's love, in a desire not to offend His commands or injure our neighbor. When we go to seminars, sanctuaries, or other such meetings and there is no stirring toward these types of pursuits, we must be forced to look at our lives in light of the scripture and confess that we are falling short of what encountering God has been defined as in biblical terms.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Revival has been defined as an encounter with the presence of God, which results in the renewal of humanity for their original purpose— fellowship with God. The focus of revival is that of repentance, prayer, an emphasis on the word of God, and Christ-centered worship. Renewal cannot take place without a divine participation, in spite of all religious activity. Revival is indeed a sovereign act of God and can truly unfold as He engages His people. Apart from His Holy Spirit there can be no such revival.

How is one to identify such an encounter and what are the results or impact in the life of one who has been interacting with the presence of a Holy God? This project has been an attempt to establish a scriptural precedent whereby one can have a richer theological understanding of the effects of revival. If one cannot experience revival apart from the divine, the conclusion is that with genuine renewal or revival there is involvement with and entering into the Holy. Experiencing the Holy has always had profound effects upon anyone or anything which comes into contact with the Holy Other.

In Exodus, holiness was described in relationship to the divine presence. Just as one cannot experience revival apart from God's presence (revival consists in encountering His presence), one cannot encounter His presence without also encountering His holiness; becoming holy is impossible apart from the involvement of God. Everything that was made holy, called to be holy, or identified as holy in the book of Exodus was always in relation to the divine presence. The biblical mindset is

one of a complete comprehension that one's own righteousness and ceremonies are filthy rags at best, and only through God's precious, incomparable touch is one made worthy to enter into the realm of the sanctified.

God reminds the entire nation of Israel that their blessed uniqueness lay in relationship to Him, and if and when that relationship ever ceased, the result was that they would be just as they were before He "chose" them as His special treasure, just "another" so-called nation. It was His holy presence that made them a kingdom of priests, not their ability nor their giftedness nor their sanctuary which made them holy. No, to the contrary, it was all about God, and apart from His presence there could be no sanctuary and no need for any priest to minister before His presence. The people of God, Israel, as well as the Church, cease to be such when they fail to maintain their relationship with the divine presence and revert to the lifestyle of humanity around them.

This position of holiness was again in direct relation to the divine presence. It was also holiness identified as contagious and therefore much more than casual contact. When someone or something came into contact with the divine, there were ramifications which transpired; namely, if one became God's, he then belonged to God for His sole use and specified boundaries. This holiness became defined in terms of service and how it could be handled (if when and by whom), approached, and the ramifications if the holy were defiled. In the end, the position in God, which made holy, clearly identified such items, people, animals, places, and time periods as sacred and not common.

This position identified in Exodus becomes ethical and moral in the book of Leviticus. The choosing of Israel by God and the way in which He births them as His holy nation in Exodus leads to expectations by God of His people because they belong to Him. Because of this privileged position God identifies what He expects of His holy nation in their practice. The positional leads to the practical, the ongoing process whereby Israel is being made the people of God. This practical reality becomes righteousness or a lifestyle of obedience to the laws of God. One has become holy by the claim of God, but if one is to continue to be holy there must be a willful choice of obedience to the commandments of God. Mere formal obedience does not make one holy; rather, obedience to God is the fruit of being Holy. Even though perfection in the strictest sense is not maintained, provision is made for forgiveness, but the mindset of Leviticus understands the difference between the holy and unholy, and clearly the unholy is never to be accepted as a way of life for Israel.

People who walk with God must be holy, because He is holy— not just ceremonial holiness but rather relational holiness. Leviticus spells out holiness in terms of personal and social righteousness; it is pressed out for day-to-day living in the community of believers. There is a clear relationship shown when the divine presence is not maintained on a personal level: the end result is a loss of reverence for the sacred presence, loss of the fear of God, and in the end, because there is no fear, there is no obedience. What Leviticus clearly defines is a God who desires his people to live in harmony with His holiness so that they are willing to be obedient to His laws; the end result is a covenant relationship.

This call to obedience is never intended to hurt or limit the people of the covenant, as Satan tried to suggest to Eve in the garden, but rather is intended to produce healthy, holistic communities and families which will result in strong societies where everyone can function according to God's perfect plan. Leviticus affects every area of Israel's life: sexual, social, worship, business, thoughts, actions, attitudes, dress, and relationships on various levels. Holiness is defined in terms of ethics, which define what is acceptable and unacceptable before the Lord. The soul that persisted in rebellious defiance of the commandments of God was cut off from the kingdom.

This covenant is defined also in the terms of love, the foundation of it all. God chose Israel; in the end Israel loves God because He first loved them and chose them. That love is demonstrated in a desire to be obedient to His word and sacrifice is made for shortcomings to express sorrow. God is "holy, holy, holy," and yet it was not His holy- otherness (which cannot be duplicated) that moved Him to choose Israel—it was His magnificent love. Therefore, Leviticus communicates the importance of love: love for Him, and love for one another. The commandments in Leviticus are all about having healthy relationships. When one loves God, there will be a healthy relationship with Him demonstrated in obedience. When one loves their neighbor, there will be a desire to do all that is needed to bless and not injure him. How could one kill someone whom they love, steal from someone whom they love, or injure in some malicious way a neighbor whom they love? The answer is obvious: when society is filled with the love of God, humanity is treated with the dignity they deserve. Thus, love thy neighbor as thyself (Leviticus 18:19) is the golden rule.

In the book of Galatians, the righteousness of the believer has been established by faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. The importance and preeminence of Galatians has been established in comparison to the writings of Paul. The first major issue established is the fact that Paul defends our justification/righteousness by faith in Christ apart from any works of the law. Our salvation is totally dependant upon the Power of the Cross and our trust in God, nothing that we can do in and of ourselves. The continuity between the Old Testament and the New is demonstrated by looking back at Abraham. His position in God was something that was dependant upon faith and God's ability to declare righteous.

Justification (being righteous) is the act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner righteous in Jesus Christ; the emphasis is on the act of God and not man. It is not the result of a man's character or works because it is God that does the justifying. The initial beginning of humanity being declared Holy in the New Testament has its foundation in the power of God. Just as Holiness in Exodus started with the presence of God, in the book of Galatians one's position of righteousness/holiness starts with the presence of Jesus. Just as no one could be made holy under the law but only by relationship to the divine presence of God, righteousness can be achieved only in relationship to the power of God and His person, by faith in Him and His work, not works of our own.

In the Book of Galatians the righteousness of God in Christ included not only a right standing before God on the basis of faith, but also included the provision to partake of the righteous character of God himself. This new found position in Christ was not an end in itself, or in other words, this position, like in the Book of Leviticus,

effects who we are and what we do, our practice. This faith in Jesus Christ includes not only believing the message about Jesus Christ, but also trust in and commitment of oneself to Him. Faith not only passively receives, it also actively uses what God had bestowed to share in His righteousness. Faith is not just something that is acknowledged or confessed but a powerful motive to obedience and to every other good work. Just as there was a result between the presence of the divine making holy and a call to live holy, there is the relationship between faith and works, position and practice, what we confess and how we live, the dynamic duo at work.

Paul defends this liberty in Galatians with adamant fervor, yet this liberty is not a liberty to live as one pleases, no more than Israel was chosen by God to be holy and the people then sent out to live as they pleased. They were to be a holy nation unto God. So also we have been called into a liberty from sin, not into the bondage of it—not a liberty in which one confesses to be justified or holy, and it is merely a position in God so that they feel their lifestyle is of no consequence in the relationship. The liberty that Paul defends is all in the cross, it alone is sufficient, but the cross is more than some religious ceremony that is powerless to change the flesh. No, in it is all power of the God-head to deliver from the rule of the power of sin. The cross is more than a symbol or a relic of the past. It is the representation of the greatest plan in history from the mind of God Himself, to call His people into His holy presence and deliver them from the evil rule of sin in which the world is held captive.

Paul delivers in one book the same message that Moses wrote in two, namely Exodus and Leviticus. Yes, we are made holy by the single act of God in the work of Justification, without any help of our own works to make ourselves righteous.

Salvation is all about the greatness of God, and our encounter of His unsurpassed power to deliver. In what is considered the most passionate of his letters, he defends our position in Christ with the greatest of zeal, yet with pinpoint precision he goes on to declare the result of that newfound position. The impact of the encounter will be a life of obedience to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Just as the books of Exodus and Leviticus demonstrate who has been brought into the kingdom of God and who is holy and unholy, so also the works of the flesh and fruit of the spirit demonstrate those who have experienced a new-found position in Christ Jesus.

The beauty in Galatians is Paul's ability to hold in perfect holy tension the position of salvation/justification in the grace or work of God alone, and at the same time announce the results (practice) of that work of grace. He defends the cross from legalists, and yet protects it from those who would practice lasciviousness. The work of God is complete, His act of making holy or justifying is finished, yet the Christian's pursuit of sanctification is ongoing. What is the key for success in this life of Faith? The answer is an ongoing relationship with the presence encountered made available through and by the Holy Spirit. One must have a daily dependency upon God and trust in His presence in our life daily to perfect what He has begun.

Paul gives an extensive list of the works of the flesh—again demonstrating continuity from Old to New—which resemble the lifestyles given in the book of Leviticus that were unacceptable to God under the Old Covenant. The message is not that salvation is earned any more than holiness was earned in Exodus. Just as those lifestyles were displeasing to God in Leviticus, they still bring sorrow to the heart of God and further demonstrate one has not entered into the kingdom. Under the Old

Covenant there was sacrifice; in the New there is the blood of Jesus. Forgiveness is still available. The issue is when someone can continually live in opposition to the kingdom of God and not seek forgiveness and reconciliation. It is a mere demonstration that an encounter in the presence of God is falsified.

The emphasis in dealing with the works of the flesh demonstrates that a person is just that, in the flesh. The Spirit of God would not lead someone into things contrary to God's word and character. When someone lives in the flesh they are not of the kingdom, because flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom. Not only does Paul identify the lifestyles of those who would be living according to the flesh, he clearly states those lifestyles are evidence against the naming of Christ. The problem is in the lifestyle, the practice, and in accepting what God has identified as wrong as doable within the kingdom of heaven.

There is indeed grace for those bound up in those lifestyles, hindered by the power of sin. Grace in abundance, and grace without measure! The question is not "Can God forgive?" Rather, the question is "Can God deliver?" Yes! The issue is not stumbling into sin or a failure, for all have sinned, and all have a sinful nature. The issue is that with all possibility there can be future failures. The focus of Paul is that these unacceptable lifestyles are ongoing, continual, and acceptable. For the child of God this cannot be said. What God's word has identified as sinful and wrong can never be accepted as a normal part of a believer's life.

For the believer when there is sin and or failure in the Old Testament, atonement was made; in the New Testament atonement has been made. Thus forgiveness is sought and given. It cannot be that those who have encountered God accept the

works of the flesh as average for the child of God. We cannot create such a spiritual curve in our standards, ethics, morals, lifestyles, and attitudes that we accept what, according to God's word, is failure. It is similar to the football player who graduates from college and carries a newspaper under his arm for a show, and yet he cannot even read. His teachers have done him a great injustice. When we create spiritual curves in the kingdom of God, which accommodate the works of the flesh, we are doing the kingdom an injustice.

Is there grace? Can there be curves? Yes! The problem is when the curve is considered the standard, and it is given all the time. The person who is really making all *F*'s thinks he or she is average or above, when in reality he or she is not making the grade. The difference is in the heart, the motive. When someone has sinned and they know it and confess it and are sorrowful for their failure and desire to do better, the scriptures identifies this person as a child of God. Sin was never intended to be accepted as the standard for the child of God. What is the difference? The difference is like the child who makes an *F* and does not care and the child who makes a *D* but wants to do better. In the end when failure is in the heart of a true believer, a person of faith, an individual lead by the Spirit, there will either be conviction (God pursuing man) or repentance (man pursuing God). The scriptures are precise: when one has encountered the Spirit of God, the works of the flesh will not be considered normal for the child of the kingdom of heaven.

The fruit of the Spirit is the result of the outflow in the heart of a believer of the Holy Spirit of God. A genuine encounter with God produces results that are clear and evident. How can one determine there has been an encounter with God? By their

fruits ye shall know them. Fruit is not measured as someone's greatness in the eyes of others nor in the talents or apparent accomplishments that have been established. As this project is being finished, the fall of a well-known evangelical leader has unfolded.¹ His fruit (or his deeds) and his character were revealed as being evil. Fruit are the result of a relationship. Fruit are our character that can only come as an outflow, not of religious education and activity, but only from a sincere relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

The quality of the fruit of the Spirit does not make someone perfect in the strictest sense of the word, but it does demonstrate the individual is in fellowship with God. Only from a continuing in the word of God can someone produce fruit. Through a continuing in repentance, humility, pursuing a relationship with Jesus, and connectivity in spiritual things, the life of the Spirit flows through a vessel and creates the character of Jesus Christ. It is more than a one-time experience; it is an ongoing relationship. It is walking in the spirit with an ongoing process, where no one will ever arrive to a level of perfection until we see Him and are recreated in His likeness. It is a daily walking, a daily dying, a daily crucifixion, a daily devotion, cultivation, re-examination, confession—living in the realm of the Spirit.

What is this harvest of the Spirit? It is the qualities, the higher qualities identified by the law and yet what the law could not create in humanity. The law was given as a school master to show us our need for Christ and to help us see our true need for a Christ on a Cross. The law did not have the power to change, but it was needed to restrain evil and identify the good and the bad. Even though it identified the evil, it

¹ Jonathan Darman, "A Pastor's Fall from Grace," *Newsweek*, November 2006, 34-35.

did not have the power to change the heart of humanity. The power of the Cross reached down into the heart of humanity and did what the law could not do. The fruit of the Spirit is not the result of an outward restriction enforced, but an inward power realized. The indwelling of the presence of God inside of mankind brings an impact like no other force.

The fruit of the Spirit is identified in the law of Leviticus in terms of love: love for one's neighbor, love for the stranger, love for God, love for the nation, love for the less fortunate, and even love for one's enemy. This is the same love Jesus spoke of, the same love Paul identifies as the outflow of the Holy Spirit truly abiding in the heart of a believer. God did not change from the Old Testament to the New Testament. This is a love that can only come from the people of God. It is the love that moved a Holy God to give His only begotten Son for a world that was lost. It was the love that moved Jesus to carry the cross for all of lost humanity steeped in the bondage of sin.

The fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control) are the qualities that result from obeying the commandments of God. These traits would be the outcome of living by the teachings of the law. The problem was that the letter of the law could not produce them without faith even in the Old Testament. The same is true in the New Testament; dead works still cannot produce something that requires a supernatural, otherworldly power in one's heart. Only a supernatural force can produce the harvest of the Spirit. Just as these traits among Israel in the book of Leviticus became a righteousness quality as they were lived out on a daily basis and evidenced God's presence in their midst and

identified them as His people, Galatians identifies the traits as the characteristics that can only be produced by God's Holy presence. The only way one can possibly display these qualities is through an encounter with God.

Why was John Wesley chosen as an extra biblical source or example? Wesley is well-known for his pursuit of holiness and the doctrine of sanctification. His early life serves as a powerful example of a pursuit of holiness, without the encounter with the Spirit of God, the letter of the law without the Spirit. In spite of all his religious devotion, in the end, he felt something was missing— something that “dead” works of the flesh could not bring into his life. That something was an encounter with the Holy One. In the end, his Aldersgate experience, where he trusted “Christ alone” for His righteousness, was the turning point in his life, his encounter with God.

Wesley is also known among Revivalists for his desire to measure all precepts by the scripture. Although He referred to experience, tradition, and reason, the final test was the Bible, the written Word of God. This thesis is given foremost to the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Galatians with reference between the various passages of the law and that of the gospel. What better source to use than Wesley, who would have concurred that we consider the scripture in identifying the righteous results of experiencing the Holy Presence of God. His belief that scripture was supreme concurs with the focus of this paper, which is that of the scriptures.

Wesley's concept of sanctification as an imputed work rather than just a mere acquittal of debt or guilt expresses the biblical concept conveyed in this project by the change of character bought about in the life of a believer. Sanctification brought about this change where the believer is made to be a partaker of the divine nature.

Rather than just a shallow concept of forgiveness, Wesley believed true faith brings about change in conduct. His view of man's systemic illness in the power of sin and the power of sanctification by the presence of God which created a heart of obedience follows suit with the scriptures and this paper.

Wesley understood encountering God's presence in the work of sanctification included both the positional work of grace and the practical pursuit in our daily living. One was sanctified in an instant when they encountered the work of sanctification accomplished by God's power, and yet there was an ongoing pursuit of living out this holiness. His theology emphasized living out moment by moment in the Spirit, or as Paul said in Galatians— walking in the Spirit. His concept of sanctification was based on the ability of the Spirit to give the believer the ability to do what they could not in the flesh, encountering God's presence and continuing in it.

For Wesley sanctification was identified as perfect love. This echoes the testimony of Moses as he gives the commandment of God in "love thy neighbor as thyself." It continues in the theme of the Apostle Paul in his concept of serving one another through love and his fruit of the Spirit. Sanctification was something that had its beginning in God, only by faith, with the emphasis on the presence of God, not by mere moral or ethical standards as Wesley himself well understood. Yet this sanctification brought about a death to sin and a renewal in the image of God. The Cross, for both Wesley and the Apostle Paul, meant death to the carnal flesh. From his faith that works by love to his identity as the practitioner, Wesley is an inspirational example of a life that encountered God's presence and reflected it in his daily living.

This paper demonstrates the concept of positional holiness which results from an encounter with God in Exodus. It demonstrates the relevance of that position to the pursuit and practice of holiness in a lifestyle within the community context in Leviticus. It conveys the concepts of righteousness as defined in the book of Galatians, the righteousness founded in our position in Christ and the practice of that righteousness founded in a life in the Spirit. Finally, if it was good enough for Moses, good enough for Paul, good enough for Wesley, it is good enough for this author.

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APPENDIX ONE
WORKS OF THE FLESH

	Greek	AV	RV	RSV	NEB	NASB
Sexual Sins	<i>porneia</i> <i>akatharsia</i> <i>aselgia</i>	[adultery] fornication uncleaness lasciviousness	AV AV AV	AV impurity licentiousness	immorality RSV sensuality	NEB
Religious Deviations	<i>eidololatreia</i> <i>pharmakeia</i>	idolatry witchcraft	AV sorcery	AV RV	AV RV	AV RV
Disorders in Personal Relationships	<i>echthra</i> <i>eris</i> <i>zelos</i> <i>thumos</i> <i>eritheia</i> <i>dichostasia</i> <i>hairesis</i> <i>phthonos</i>	hatred variance emulations wrath strife seditions heresies envyings [murders]	enmities strife jealousies wraths factions divisions AV AV	enmity RV jealousy anger selfishness dissension party spirit envy	quarrels contentious temper envy fits of rage selfish ambitions dissensions party intrigues jealousies	RV RV RSV outbursts of anger disputes NEB factions AV
Sins of Intemperance	<i>methe</i> <i>komos</i>	drunkenness revellings	AV AV	AV carousing	drinkings bouts orgies	AV RSV

APPENDIX TWO

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Aspect	Greek Number	Definition	Attribute of God	Attribute for Christians
Love	G26 <i>agape</i>	sacrificial, unmerited deeds to help a needy person	Ex 34:6; Jn 3:16; Ro 5:8; 1 Jn 4:8, 16	Jn 13:34-35; Ro 12:9-10; 1 Pe 1:22; 1 Jn 4:7, 11-12, 21
Joy	G5915 <i>chara</i>	an inner happiness not dependant on outward circumstances	Ps 104:31; Isa 62:5; Lk 15:7, 10	Dt 12:7, 12, 18; Ps 64:10; Isa 25:9; Php 4:4; 1 Pe 1:8
Peace	G1645 <i>eirene</i>	harmony in all relationships	Isa 9:6-7; Eze 34:25; Jn 14:27; Heb 13:20	Isa 26:3; Ro 5:1; 12:18; Ro 14:17; Eph 2:14-17
Patience	G3429 <i>makrothumia</i>	putting up with others, even when one is severely tired	Ro 9:22; 1 Ti 1:16; 1 Pe 3:20; 2 Pe 3:9, 15	Eph 4:2; Col 1:11; Heb 6:12; Jas 5:7-8, 10
Kindness	G5983 <i>chrestotes</i>	doing thoughtful deeds for others	Ro 2:4; 11:22; Eph 2:7; Tit 3:4	1 Co 13:4; Eph 4:32; Col 3:12
Goodness	G20 <i>agathosume</i>	showing generosity to others	Ne 9:25, 35; Ps 31:19; Mk 10:18	Ro 15:14; Eph 5:9; 2 Th 1:11
Faithfulness	G4411	trustworthiness and reliability	Ps 33:4; 1 Co 1:9; 10:13; Heb 10:23; 1 Jn 1:9	Lk 16:10-12; 2 Th 1:4; 2 Ti 4:7; Tit 2:10
Gentleness	G4559 <i>prautes</i>	meekness and humility	Zec 9:9; Mt 11:29	Isa 66:2; Mt 5:5; Eph 4:2; Col 3:12
Self Control	G1602 <i>egkrateia</i>	victory over sinful desires		Pr 16:32; Tit 1:8; 2:12; 1 Pe 5:8-9; 2 Pe 1:6

VITA

The author of this work is Chuck Leo Simmons. He was born April 12, 1969, in Bennettsville, South Carolina. He graduated from Bennettsville High School in 1987. In the fall of 1987 he moved to Charlotte, North Carolina to attend East Coast Bible College, where he received a Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies (1991). In 1991 he entered the Church of God Theological Seminary; he graduated with a Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministries in (1995). In 2003 he entered the Doctor of Ministry program at the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, the Revival and Reform track, anticipating graduation in May of 2007.

Chuck served as a full-time evangelist in the Church of God for six and one-half years, 1989-1995. He assumed the role of pastor in 1996 at the Rocky River Church of God, Anderson, South Carolina. Currently he is the pastor at the Longview Church of God, Hickory, North Carolina, where he has been for six years. Chuck has been in the pastorate for a total of eleven and one-half years.

Besides Bible study, music is one of Chuck's passions. He plays piano, guitar, and the drums. He has recorded several gospel albums with the Loft Studios, performing many songs he had written himself.

Chuck married Wendi Baskins of Chesterfield, South Carolina in 1988. They have two daughters, Hannah (15) and Charity (14).